

THE
ROMANCE OF HISTORY.

England.

BY HENRY NEELE.

“ Truth is strange,
Stranger than fiction.”

Lord Byron.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

Richard the Second.

1377. ON the death of Edward; his grandson Richard was crowned without any opposition, though only eleven years of age. His three uncles, the Dukes of Lancaster, York, and Gloucester, were appointed regents.

The House of Commons, which was now growing into great consequence, for the first time chose a speaker, Peter de la Mare.

1378. The war was carried on between England and France, but in a very languid manner, when Charles V. died and was succeeded by his son Charles VI. a minor.

1381. To assist the government to carry on the war with France, the Parliament ordered a poll tax, which led to the rebellion of Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, and others, who marched to London at the head of 100,000 men. The King held a conference with Tyler in Smithfield, where the latter was put to death by Walworth, the Mayor of London, and his followers submitted to the King.

The King married Anne of Luxembourg, daughter of the Emperor Wenceslaus.

1385. The Scots, having no cavalry, applied to the regency of France, who sent over John de Vienne with 1500 men; at which an army of 60,000 men, with Richard and the Duke of Lancaster at their head, entered Scotland by Berwick. The Scots, leaving their country to be pillaged, entered England by Carlisle, and committed horrid devastations in Cumberland and Westmorland; but Richard, in-

stead of waiting for the enemy on the west borders, returned to England, to his pleasures and amusements.

1386. The Duke of Lancaster, having some pretensions to the kingdom of Castile by marriage, carried over the flower of the English army to Spain.

Great discontents arose in England, amongst the nobles headed by the Duke of Gloucester, against Richard, on account of his unbounded affection for the Earl of Oxford, whom he created Duke of Ireland, and whom he allowed to govern the kingdom as he pleased. Richard retired to Eltham; but the Parliament sent him a message, saying, that if he did not return and consent to the banishment of his favourites, they would proceed to choose another King. He then banished his favourites, but soon afterwards recalled them.

1387. The favourites stirred up the King to revenge; on which the Duke of Gloucester and other lords took to arms. The Duke of Ireland fled to Cheshire, and raised some forces, with which he was marching to London to the relief of the King, but was encountered in Oxfordshire by Gloucester and totally defeated. He fled into the Low Countries, where he died in exile a few years after: his papers being taken exposed the King's pernicious designs. A parliament was assembled, by which several of the King's ministers were sentenced to be hanged at Tyburn, and others banished. To restore peace entirely, the King was persuaded to issue a general pardon.

1389. The Duke of Lancaster, having sold all right to the crown of Castile, returned to England.

Richard took the reins of government into his own hands, and changed the ministry. He made William of Wickham, Bishop of Winchester, his Chancellor.

1392. The Scots made an irruption into England, when a battle was fought near Otterbourne, in which the son of

the Earl of Northumberland was taken prisoner, and Douglas, the leader of the Scots, was killed.

1394. The Queen died : she was a great favourer of the followers of Wickliffe, or Lollards. This sect had been founded for some time, and was gaining ground very fast.

1396. The English and French courts concluded a truce for twenty-eight years : and to render the amity between the two crowns more durable, Richard was affianced to Isabella, Charles the Sixth's daughter, though she was only seven years of age. Richard went over to Ireland to quell a rebellion that had broken out there, and to revenge the death of the Earl of March, who had been slain in an action, and had been declared presumptive heir to the crown, as Richard had no children.

1398. The Duke of Lancaster died, and his son the Earl of Derby, who had been created Duke of Hereford, succeeded him whilst he was suffering banishment on account of a quarrel between him and the Duke of Norfolk. Taking advantage of the King's absence in Ireland, he landed in England, at Ravenspur in Yorkshire, with several nobles, pretending that he only wished to be reinstated in his possessions as Duke of Lancaster. Richard, arriving from Ireland, found that almost the whole nation had joined Henry of Lancaster, for the purpose of making him King. Even the very army which Richard brought from Ireland deserted him. He retired to the Isle of Anglesea, to embark either for Ireland or France ; but the Earl of Northumberland got possession of his person, and carried him to Henry, at Flint Castle. Henry immediately conducted him to London, where a Parliament was assembled, which formally deposed Richard, as unworthy to reign. One of the acts alleged against him, was the seizing his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, sending him over to Calais, and there having him privately murdered.

Henry laid claim to the Crown as being descended by his

another from Edmond Earl of Lancaster, the pretended elder brother of Edward I., but who had been laid aside on account of some deformity in his person.

The Parliament, having been gained over by Henry, would not examine his pretensions too narrowly; and on the 30th of September 1399, they declared him King of England and France.

1400. Richard died in Pomfret Castle. Some historians affirm that he was starved to death, others that he was assassinated.

The Spaniard's Ransom.

He was the soul of honour,
And all our praises of him are like waters
Drawn from a spring, that still rise full, and leave
The part remaining greatest."

BEN JONSON.

The Spaniard's Ransom.

AT the great battle of Najara, in Spain, gained by Edward the Black Prince over the French and Castilian army commanded by Bertrand du Guesclin and the Count of Trastamare, the English performed acts of romantic heroism, which although less generally known than those by which they distinguished themselves at the battles of Cressy and Poitiers, were not in themselves less splendid or less honourable to the national character. Among those who, as the reward of their chivalric deeds on this occasion, received the honour of knighthood on the field of battle from the hand of their illustrious commander, were two esquires, named Robert Hawley and John Shackell. These gentlemen had also been fortunate enough to secure a more substantial reward for their valour by becoming the joint captors of the Count de Denia, a Spanish grandee of the first class, whose ransom-money would be sufficient to render them independent of pecuniary cares. This nobleman having been fairly, by the

laws of arms, adjudged their prisoner, they brought him with them to England, where he was held in a state of honourable captivity, being admitted into the presence of the King and the great nobles until such time as the sum of ten thousand marks, which had been agreed upon as the price of his ransom, should be remitted to him from his own country. Days, and weeks, and months rolled over his head, and still the expected remittances did not arrive. Either there was some difficulty in extracting the stipulated sum from his vassals in the absence of their lord, or, in the present precarious mode of communication between the two countries, there was some hesitation as to the means by which it should be transmitted to England, or danger of its having fallen into improper hands, even although it had already been forwarded thither. The haughty spirit of the Don now became indignant, and impatient of the delays of his vassals; although his captors, in the fullest reliance on his honour and generosity, never pressed him for payment of the ransom, and continued to treat him with the utmost respect and courtesy. At length, however, the Spaniard came to an agreement with the two knights, that he should be permitted to return to his own country for the purpose of levying his ransom, leav-

ing his son, a youth of the age of about seventeen years, behind him in the hands of the Englishmen as a hostage for the due performance of his engagements with the latter.

“Farewell, noble Count,” said Sir John Shackell, as he assisted his captive to his stirrup: “health and prosperity attend thee!”

Sir John's colleague, Sir Robert Hawley, expressed similar sentiments, while the youth clung to his father's hand and bathed it with his tears.

“Farewell, my generous captors,” said the Count, “a long and grateful farewell—and thou, my son, ere I breathe to thee a shorter adieu, swear, as God and our Lady shall help thee, swear on thy father's sword—that sword which was never yet dishonoured, either by the grasp of cowardice or the breath of perjury—that thou wilt remain the true and faithful captive of these knights, nor seek by any means, direct or indirect, to withdraw thyself from their custody without their consent, until the ten thousand marks due to them for thy father's ransom-money shall have been well and truly paid.”

The youth knelt down, took his father's sword, and kissing the handle (a very frequent substitute upon emergencies for a crucifix in those days,) exclaimed,—“all this I solemnly swear, and so may

Heaven prosper me in my after days as I shall observe or violate this vow !”

“ And now then,” said the Count, throwing his arms round his son’s neck, “ farewell, my own beloved Guzman ; not long shall the sincerity with which thou canst keep an oath be tried ; yet the honour of de Denia might be trusted, although the period during which it were to be put to the test were to extend throughout the whole duration of his existence. Farewell, my brave boy—a sad but not a long farewell !”

Thus saying, he mounted his gallant steed, which, together with the arms that he had borne in the battle, had been restored to him by his captors, waved his hand once more in token of his farewell to Guzman and the knights, and, putting spurs to his horse, took the road leading from London to a port on the western coast, which had been fixed upon as the place of his embarkation.

The young lord Guzman de Denia, after his father’s departure, lived a very retired and secluded life in the house which the knights occupied in Westminster. He never could be induced by them to accompany them to court, or to mingle in those gaieties and hospitalities in which his father had not scrupled to participate. Even King Richard and

the Duke of Lancaster had expressed their anxious desire that the young Count de Denia should be introduced to them, but the Spaniard resolutely maintained his privacy. Time lingered on, and still the expected ransom did not arrive from Spain, nor any intelligence of the Count. This delay, however, was sufficiently accounted for by the information contained in the public dispatches which arrived in England. It appeared that Pedro the Cruel, who had been restored to his throne by the victorious arms of Edward the Black Prince, had again, by his tyranny and oppression, goaded his subjects to such a state of exasperation, that they had once more taken up arms against him, and proclaimed his bastard brother, (Henry, Count of Trastamare,) King of Castile. The Count de Denia, who had now made his peace with Don Pedro, and entered with the utmost ardour and devotion into his service, had suffered his duty as a subject to supersede for a time his anxiety to procure the liberation of his son, and was engaged in active warfare against the Count of Trastamare and the rebels. That struggle, as the reader has already learned from the perusal of the tale entitled "The Starry Tower," terminated in the overthrow and death of Don Pedro, and the peaceable assumption of the sovereign authority by his

rival. The same messengers who brought this intelligence to England, informed the young Count de Denia, that his father had been slain while gallantly fighting by the side of his sovereign, and that he was now therefore heir to his title and estates, but that the new King had seized the latter into his own hands, as a punishment for what he called the rebellion of de Denia. Deprived at one blow of his father, his fortune and his liberty, Don Gusman resigned himself to the most profound grief, which not all the tender and delicate attentions of the English knights could in the slightest degree alleviate.

The knights in the mean time, besides their sympathy for their young captive, or rather guest, felt considerably embarrassed on their own account. In the full expectation of shortly receiving the princely sum of money, which the Count had agreed to pay for his ransom, they had launched out into expenses, and incurred debts which the slender pay of two simple knights was far from being adequate to meet and answer. The news of the death of the Count de Denia drew a host of clamorous creditors to their doors, and the prospect of beggary and imprisonment stared them in their faces. Still, as long as they held the noble young hostage in their hands, they were in hopes that they might yet be able to

retrieve their fortunes. The Duke of Lancaster, John of Ghent, who had married the Lady Constantia, the eldest daughter of the deceased King, Pedro, laid claim to the crown of Castile in her right, and was levying a formidable army in England, for the purpose of proceeding to Spain and enforcing that claim. Should his invasion prove successful, he would no doubt restore the Count de Denia to the wealth and honours of which he had been deprived, who would then be able to pay them down the stipulated ransom. The Duke's claim, however, which had at first revived the hopes of the two knights, ultimately proved the total destruction of them.

The Duke of Lancaster, to whose scheming and intriguing brain every thing conducive to the advancement of his own interest readily suggested itself, soon perceived how materially the object of his expedition into Castile might be furthered by his carrying in his train thither a young nobleman of so ancient a family and such extensive possessions as the Count de Denia; one too, who had such substantial reasons for wishing to depose the present monarch as the desires to revenge his father's death and recover his own patrimony. John of Ghent's avarice, however, or perhaps his poverty,

did not permit him to tender to the two knights the amount of the ransom-money which was owing to them, but he briefly and peremptorily summoned them to deliver up their prisoner to him upon pain of the King's and his own especial displeasure. The knights, on receipt of this summons, took the precaution to remove the young Count out of the way, and returned word, in answer to the Duke's message, that the Count de Denia was by the law of arms their prisoner, and that they would not give him up until he had paid his ransom. As they knew that this answer could not fail to exasperate the Duke of Lancaster, they were prepared to expect the worst; and accordingly never went abroad, or even remained at home, unarmed, except when they retired to rest at night, in order that they might be able to repel any attempt which might be made to seize their persons. The Duke would have been very willing to overlook the insult which the knights had shown to his authority, could he have discovered the hiding-place of the young Count, who he did not doubt was held in strict and unwilling durance by his captors; but although he by his emissaries made the strictest search and inquiries in every place where it appeared probable that they had secreted their treasure, it was without being able to attain any satisfactory information.

Sir Robert Hawley and Sir John Shackell were one afternoon seated moodily and gloomily at a table in the middle of one of the large and superbly furnished apartments of their house at Westminster : the contrast between the scantiness of their present means and their splendid anticipations, was marked by the disorder and confusion which reigned around them in the midst of all their finery, the neglected and tarnished state of their rich hangings, the old and worn rushes with which the chamber was strewn, and the single domestic who, instead of the numerous attendants in rich liveries accustomed to wait upon them, now remained in the apartment, and who seemed so fully aware of the altered state of his masters' fortunes, that instead of standing in waiting upon them, he was actually seated at his ease in a chair at the opposite end of the apartment.

"Our affairs look sufficiently gloomy, Shackell," said Sir Robert Hawley ; "would we had never seen the Count de Denia, or heard of the battle of Najara ! Yet this robber Duke, who rides through England sword in hand, and demands our persons and our goods as though King, Lords, and Commons spake by his mouth, must not be tamely suffered to rob us of the prize which we have purchased by our toils and by our blood."

“ Sooner, by Heaven !” said Shackell, “ shall the sword which I drew at Najara be sheathed in John of Ghent’s bosom. ’Sblood ! man, while King Richard lives, it will be no treason to kill the Duke of Lancaster.”

At that moment a loud outcry was heard in the streets, and the door of the knights’ house seemed to be violently assailed with the butt ends of lances, as if some persons were anxiously desiring admission. Sir Robert Hawley and the servant immediately drew their swords.

“ They must be resisted to the death,” said Hawley. “ ’Tis the Duke’s men-at-arms, who have come to complete what the Duke’s summoners have begun, and to seize upon our persons and property, in the hope of compelling us to acquiesce in the injustice of their master.”

“ Nay, nay !” said Shackell, “ they will not go to that extremity yet. ’Tis but a repetition of the summons. Let us hear them, for perchance we may find that they have somewhat moderated in their demands.”

As Hawley seemed tacitly to accede to his companion’s proposition, the servant left the apartment, and shortly afterwards returned, ushering in two knights armed from head to foot, except that their

visors were down, and followed by three men-at-arms. Hawley and Shackell immediately started to their feet and drew their swords.

"What mean you, my masters," said Shackell, "thus cased in iron, and with naked weapons, to intrude upon the privacy of peaceful and inoffensive men? Sir Ralph Ferries, we have fought side by side with you at Cressy and Najara; and you, Sir Alan Buxhall, cannot be ignorant of our reputation, and character; what crime can we have been guilty of, to be subjected to this outrage?"

"You look very like peaceful men, indeed, Sir John," said Ferries, "when even while sitting round your own hearth you think it necessary to be clothed in armour. Guilt is naturally suspicious, and fears even the shadow which its own timorous steps cast around it."

"I am not aware of having committed any crime, Sir Ralph," retorted Shackell, "unless it be one to have entitled myself to the gratitude of those who wish to bury the recollection of my services in oblivion, and to rob me of their hard-earned recompence."

"Sir John Shackell and Sir Robert Hawley," said Buxhall, "you have contumaciously resisted the King's commands, by refusing to deliver up the

Count de Denia into his hands, when even Majesty has condescended to make such a request to you."

"Let his Highness," said Shackell, "still further condescend to order the payment to us, from his royal Exchêquer, of the poor sum of ten thousand marks, and the Count is free from all obligation to us."

"Sir John, Sir John," said Ferries, "do you parley and make terms with your sovereign? Either discover the Count de Denia's hiding-place, or prepare to accompany us to the Tower."

"Neither," said Hawley, "will I do voluntarily. Force may compel me to the latter; but the former will I not do, though you take my heart's blood in lieu of it."

"Then arrest them, fellows," said Buxhall, turning to his men-at-arms,— "arrest them in the King's name."

The men-at-arms immediately advanced to assail the knights, but the latter put themselves in a posture of defence, and assisted by their servant, who seemed a vigorous and powerful stripling, parried their blows so dexterously, that Ferries and Buxhall were obliged to step forward to the support of their adherents. "Are ye madmen," said Sir Alan, "thus rashly to dispute the King's authori-

ty?" But his interrogatory was only answered by a blow from Sir Robert Hawley's sword, which cut through his helmet, and extended him on the ground; while Hawley, rushing past him with the utmost velocity, escaped out of the house. The four remaining assailants then bent all their strength against Shackell and the servant, and soon succeeded in overpowering them. "It is in vain, it is in vain, my trusty Alfred," said Shackell, as he saw the domestic zealously seconding his ineffectual efforts; "we must for the present yield to the violence of the oppressors; but if there be law and justice in England, that violence shall not go unpunished. A time may yet come, too, my bold-hearted lad, that I shall be able to reward thy fidelity and courage as they deserve."

"I ask for no reward, my beloved master," said Alfred; "but to see you restored to liberty, and in possession of the ransom-money which you have so nobly earned."

"Cease, cease your prattling!" said Sir Ralph Feries, as he assisted in binding Shackell; "talk not, Sir Knight, of what rewards you will bestow on your accomplice, until we see how you will yourself be able to answer for your resistance to the King's authority! Go, some of you, and seek for the other

culprit. How now, gallant Sir Alan?" he added, as he raised his companion from the ground; "I trust thou art not hurt?"

"Not much," said the other, wiping the blood from his brow; "but the villain's blow was well intended. Let not him escape, whatever may become of his fellow-traitor."

"Bevis and Walters," said Ferries, "are in search of him, and will, I doubt not, soon terminate his travels. Ha! hither they come. How now, sirrahs! what means this? so soon returned, yet unaccompanied by your prisoner?"

"Sir Knight," answered one of the men-at-arms, "he is not likely to deserve the name of prisoner very speedily. He has taken sanctuary in the adjoining abbey."

"Now, say the foul fiend," said Sir Alan Buxhall, stamping violently on the ground, "retain in his especial keeping the souls of those drivelling monks who first provided for the safety of murderers and traitors, by erecting places of sanctuary! Nevertheless, bring away the prisoner whom we have secured. The secret of the Count de Denia's hiding-place will not be less valuable because it is extracted only from one pair of lips instead of two; and unless the gallant knight is inclined to dance a

caper upon some fine morning for the amusement of the King's lieges assembled at Tyburn, the secret will not long remain in his own keeping."

Thus saying, the two knights and their party were moving away with Sir John Shackell in their custody, when Alfred flung himself on his knees before them, and taking hold of Sir Ralph Ferries' hand, earnestly besought that he might be allowed to accompany his master to the Tower. "Back! back, idiot!" said Ferries, "and thank thy obscurity and insignificance that thou hast escaped from being carried thither as a prisoner along with him. By Heaven! I have seen a younger neck than thine made acquainted with the gallows, when the head upon its shoulders chose to become too busy in state affairs."

"Nay, nay, Sir Knight," said Alfred, "will you let a gallant gentleman remain untended in a gloomy dungeon in the Tower, and deny him even the consolation of the kind offices of a faithful servant?"

"It must not be, young Sir," said Buxhall, "until, at least, the knight shows some disposition to return to his duty and allegiance as a loyal subject of King Richard's. I will not, however, deny to a gentleman, who has distinguished himself in arms, some slight indulgence. If, therefore, thou art willing

to bestow upon him one hour's attendance on each day of his confinement, thou mayest visit him at his dinner-hour, the hour of noon, when thy services may be needful to him."

"Thanks, gallant Knight!" said Alfred, "a thousand thanks! On the morrow, then, my noble master, expect a visit from your faithful servant." Sir John Shackell had scarcely time to listen to this fresh evidence of his domestic's attachment and fidelity, before he was hurried away to the place of his confinement.

That night was passed by the domestic Alfred, in a state of feverish anxiety, which sufficiently evinced his attachment to his master, and the sympathy which he felt for his unmerited sufferings. This youth was tall and elegantly formed; brawny and muscular; of a quick fiery eye, and of a dark and even swarthy complexion. As he paced the apartment of which he was now the only occupant, he gazed on its splendid decorations with a look of mingled pity and contempt. Sometimes he threw himself on a couch and endeavoured to compose himself to slumber; but he as often, after a short interval, started up, again paced the chamber with a hurried and uneven step, and seemed to be deeply pondering on some internal schemes or troubles.

Occasionally he would wring his hands and sigh heavily, draw his sword from his belt and carefully examine its point, or with his face resting on his clenched hands, seem sunk for hours in silent and intense meditation. "He must be liberated," he would often say aloud,—“he must be liberated, though I should spill my blood in the attempt.” As he strode through the apartment, his manly form, his noble countenance, and his expressive features, lighted up by the variety and the intenseness of his emotions, seemed to indicate a being who was not born to the humble station which he then filled. The civil wars, however, at that time had effected so many and such strange reverses in the fortunes of the most distinguished families, that it was by no means a rare occurrence to meet, employed in menial or laborious occupations, persons whose demeanour and language irresistibly suggested the enquiry whether they had not seen better times; but who only answered the interrogatory with their sighs or their tears. The alacrity, however, with which Alfred had performed his services to his masters, and the almost ostentatious manner in which he showed that he considered himself infinitely below them in rank and importance, seemed to preclude the idea that he belonged to the class of persons

which has just been described. The look, however, of disappointed pride which he occasionally assumed during the night, as he paced sullenly the floor of his solitary apartment, certainly did not seem in accordance with his penial garb. At length he appeared to be worn out by anxiety and fatigue; and wrapping his cloak round him, he stretched himself on the couch and soon sunk into a profound slumber.

Sir John Shackell, in the meanwhile, had passed in a little confined apartment of the Tower of London a night of still less ease and refreshment. At times he felt inclined to disclose the secret of the Count's retreat to the myrmidons of the Duke of Lancaster, since even the loss of his rich reward was preferable to that of his liberty, or even it might be of his life, of which he now stood in jeopardy. Then he reflected on the improbability of even the lawless John of Ghent going to such an extremity, and also of the injustice of which he should be guilty to Sir Robert Hawley, should he give up their captive without his concurrence in such a proceeding. The last consideration determined him resolutely to refuse making his oppressors acquainted with the place in which he had concealed the young Count. Early in the morning

he was doomed to listen to the importunate solicitations of Ferries and Buxhall, who represented to him the folly and inutility of his opposing the wishes of the King and the Duke, and that by releasing the Count he was losing nothing, because the latter was utterly incapable of ever paying a single farthing for his ransom. Sir John was, however, inexorable; and at length, in order to rid himself of their importunity, told them that he had come to a determination to give them no farther answers, but to maintain an unbroken silence as long as he remained a prisoner—a determination which he held inviolate, until at the hour of twelve his own servant, the faithful Alfred, entered his apartment.

“Generous being!” said the knight; “how have I deserved this kindness at thy hands? Come to my heart, thou miracle of faithfulness.”

“Nay, nay!” said Alfred, “I came not to waste these precious moments in idle protestations and endearments. As soon as your meal is placed upon the table and your gaolers have left you to my attendance, I have something for your ear.” The servants of the Tower soon entered, and having spread the prisoner’s meal, disappeared. “Eat, eat,” said Alfred, “and that right heartily, lest they should discover that you have had business

to attend to of even mere importance than that of eating. You must flee from this place and make the best of your way to the sanctuary at Westminster."

"My good friend!" said Sir John, shaking his head, while a melancholy smile moved his features, "now thou mockest me: how or by what means am I to escape from this place? Were such an adventure possible, trust me that I would lose but little time indeed in finding my way to the sanctuary."

"Thou and I, Sir John," said Alfred, "are so nearly of a height and so much alike in form, that wert thou to exchange thy armour for my serving-man's doublet and hose, and shroud thy face in my hood as effectually as I will hide my own in thy visor, thou mightest walk a free man out of the gates of the Tower of London, and leave me behind thee to supply thy place."

A tear gathered in the knight's eye, and he grasped his servant's hand in token of his cordial gratitude. "Nay, nay, it must not be: thanks, faithful heart, a thousand thanks, but John Skewell would rather resign the ransom-money, his liberty, and his life, than place thee in such jeopardy. Fare thee well! if this be thy scheme thou hadst better

leave me instantly, lest I be tempted to act so unworthy a part as to concur in it."

"Now this is absolute Midsummer madness," said Alfred. "What harm can happen to me? When they find out the cheat, it will do them no good to retain a poor serving-man cooped up in the Tower of London; while, if thou remainest, thou wilt be in hourly peril of thy life. A short imprisonment, for the purpose of curing me of such follies in future, will be the utmost penance to which I shall be subjected."

"True, true," said the knight; "and hesitate not to secure thy own indemnity, whatever may be the risk to me."

"Then haste thee, haste thee," said Alfred; "unbuckle, lest your lynx-eyed janitors should enter before these iron accoutrements are removed."

Thus saying, he assisted his master in disencumbering him of his armour, a work of some time, and one in which to say the truth he did not seem to be remarkably expert. As he slowly succeeded in removing the basinet, the breast-plate, and the morion, he could not help ejaculating curses on his own unskilfulness. He managed, however, with the knight's own assistance, to disencumber him of these, and was about to take off his cuisses, when,

to the dismay of both, they heard the key of the dungeon turning harshly in the wards of the lock, and presently afterwards Sir Alan Buxhall stood before them.

"How now, sirrah!" said Buxhall; "what means this?"

"A plague, Gir Knight!" said Alfred, whose self-possession did not desert him for a moment; "a plague, I say, on your serving-men of the Tower, for letting Sir John Shackell's armour remain a whole day unscoured. He would not have been able to have made his appearance before His Excellency the Lord Constable, into whose presence I have been told he is to be summoned this day, had not your gracious permission that his faithful servant should pay him a short visit given me an opportunity of putting his accoutrements into a decent plight." Thus saying, he affected to be busily engaged in scouring the pieces of armour of which he had just divested his master, while he seemed to be muttering to himself a continuation of his censure on the unseemly neglect of which the serving-men of the Tower had been guilty.

"Drivelling idiot!" said Sir Alan, laughing; "thy master will shortly have other cares to occupy his mind than the brilliancy of his coat of mail, or the gracefulness with which his plume shall dangle

from his helmet. I came to inform you that your time of remaining here is nearly expired, and that you, Sir Knight, must prepare yourself to appear with me before the Duke of Exeter, the Lord Constable of the Tower."

" 'Twas a critical moment," said Alfred, as Buxhall left the dungeon, and locked the door after him; "but by the exertion of a little speed all will yet be well. Now, Sir Knight, we must exchange characters for a short season, and thou must begin thy offices of a serving-man, by assisting in thy turn thy new master to buckle on his armour. Methinks that I feel as easy under its weight as if I were, like thyself, a true knight, and had borne arms at the battle of Najara. Trust me, I do not believe that they will be able to penetrate this disguise."

As the youth strode about the dungeon, he did indeed seem so well to become his new habiliments, that the serving-man appeared to be in an instant transformed into a knight. Sir John Shackell lost no time in arraying himself in his servant's cast-off apparel, and had scarcely finished his toilet, before the key again turned in the wards of the dungeon, and Sir Alan Buxhall once more made his appearance. "Now, troop thee, good friend," he said to Shackell: "the time of thy departure is arrived; yet ere thou partest, let me search the folds of these

garments, lest peradventure thou shouldst be the bearer of some traitorous communication ; or, by our Lady, thou may'st have that about thee which may assist us in the discovery of this springald Count." Thus saying, he proceeded with little ceremony to explore every part of the disguised knight's garments which could possibly be supposed capable of secreting a letter or a packet. The fictitious serving-man stood in no very enviable state of nerves while this scrutiny continued, but fortunately Sir Alan was so anxiously engaged in exploring his pockets, that he never once thought of looking into his face. "Thou mayest troop," he said at length ; "myself will safely see thee beyond the precincts of the Tower, that thou mayest have no opportunity of creating spies or emissaries on thy passage. Sir Knight," he added, addressing Alfred, who clad in Shackell's armour had sunk down in his seat in a state of the greatest apparent dejection, "I shall speedily return, when thou must accompany me into the presence of the Duke of Exeter." The counterfeit knight made a lowly obeisance, but wisely refrained from using his tongue ; a circumstance which called forth no observation from his gaoler, for Sir John Shackell had, as we have seen already, told him that he should preserve an unbroken silence towards

him as long as he remained a prisoner. Buxhall and Shackell then disappeared from the apartment, leaving him in total solitude.

Nearly half an hour elapsed before Sir Alan Buxhall rejoined his prisoner. "Uprouse ye, Sir Knight," he said, "the Duke of Exeter would question you, as he kindly means to exert his own influence to persuade you to obey the King's commands before sterner measures are resorted to for the purpose of enforcing your obedience. Follow me."

Alfred slowly and sullenly obeyed this mandate, and followed Sir Alan through the long windings of the ancient fortress, which led from the dungeons to the Constable's apartment. He had determined not to throw off his disguise until he arrived in the presence of the Duke of Exeter, because he knew that every moment during which the discovery was delayed, was adding to the probability of his master being able to effect his escape to the Sanctuary at Westminster Abbey. He had also every hope that the Duke, whose admiration of generous and chivalrous deeds was well-known, would be inclined to look with a lenient eye on the offence of which he had been guilty in being accessory to the flight of his master. "By Heaven!" said Buxhall, as every now and then he looked back and saw the stalwart

form of his prisoner stalking after him through the gloomy avenues of the Tower—"sword-cuts and dungeons do not seem to have tamed this proud knight's spirit. They have made no alteration in him, save that I misdoubt me if he does not now tread with a firmer step and carry a more erect gait than he did yesterday. The Lord Constable, however, may bring him to reason ; if he does not, the only privilege granted to him will most likely be simply that of making his choice between Tower-Hill and Tyburn."

In a chair of state placed on an elevated platform at the end of a long Gothic apartment, whose gloom even during the day required to be dispelled by the large torches which were held by the attendants in various parts of the room, sat the Duke of Exeter. This nobleman was one of the most distinguished warriors of the age, and was doubly allied to the royal family ; he being himself half-brother to the King, Richard the Second, and his wife being a daughter of the Duke of Lancaster. Two secretaries sat at the table below him, while various official persons connected with the despatch of business in the Tower stood around him on the platform ; and on his right hand sat his only daughter, the beautiful and accomplished Lady Elizabeth Holland. This young lady was now just entering her

seventeenth year, and to the graces of her person was reported to add endowments of mind and manners of a no less transcendent quality. She was accustomed to take her seat by her father's side, when the discharge of his functions as Constable of the Tower called upon him to act in a judicial character, and often performed the offices of the Angel of Mercy in tempering the stern and severe, although rigidly just and impartial sentences of her father.

"Sir Alan Buxhall," said the Duke, "produce your prisoner." Sir Alan immediately stepped forward and produced the disguised serving-man to the Constable.

"Sir John Shackell," said the latter, in a severe tone, "it grieves me to be called to sit in judgment on so renowned a knight as you, upon no less a charge than that of treason. You have wilfully denied and resisted the King's authority, have drawn your weapon upon His Highness's officers while in the execution of their duty, and even now, as I am informed by the good Knight Sir Alan Buxhall, continue contumaciously to reject the King's offers of the kindest terms, by accepting which you may regain your liberty. Speak, are ye still determined to reject those gracious offers?"

To this wily address, in which the grossest and most outrageous tyranny was coloured as a distinguished piece of grace and favour, the prisoner made no answer. Indeed the purport of the address scarcely deserved an answer, even had his situation been such as to enable him to give one ; but the truth is, that neither his critical situation nor the nature of the Duke's harangue was the occasion of the prisoner's silence, for he was rapt in speechless wonder as he gazed on the features of Elizabeth Holland. "Speak !" repeated the Duke. "Sir Knight, are ye still determined to reject those gracious offers ?"

"'Tis she, 'tis she !" exclaimed the prisoner.

"What is't ye mutter ?" said the Duke. "Sir Alan, have ye brought me a madman hither ? Neither this demeanour nor that voice belongs to Sir John Shackell. Unbar his visor—let me see his face."

The Duke's command was instantly obeyed, and the prisoner's visor being unbarred, discovered features which were totally unknown to all but two persons in the apartment.

"'Tis the Knight's serving-man !" exclaimed Sir Alan Buxhall : "by Heaven ! this knave has tricked me by smuggling his master out of the Tower, and remaining himself in his place."

"Say you so !" said the Duke, rising from his

seat and stamping violently on the ground, while his lip foamed with wrath: "then, by St. Paul! he shall supply his place in the halter as well as in the dungeon. Away with him to the ramparts—hang him there till every breath in his serving-man's carcase has mingled with the element that floats above London town."

"Nay, nay! gentle father," said the Lady Elizabeth, whose blushes and whose air of surprise when she first beheld the features of the prisoner, had fortunately passed unobserved, except by him who had occasioned them, and now faded from her cheek and gave way to an expression of the utmost anxiety and alarm: "Hear the young man, ere you devote him to a cruel and ignominious death. Speak, young Sir," she added, addressing the prisoner, and seeing that her father did not forbid the course which she was pursuing: "what were your motives for assisting the prisoner in making his escape from the Tower?"

"The prisoner was my master, my patron, my preserver," said Alfred; "and my motives for assisting his escape were gratitude and esteem, in addition to that motive, fair lady, which binds to thee so many devoted adorers,—admiration of excellence and virtue."

"Prisoner!" said the Duke of Exeter, "your master is a traitor."

"I am no logician, my Lord Duke," answered Alfred; "but I will grant you, that if a loyal heart and a valiant arm, and a head grown grey in the service of his country, constitute a traitor, that then my master, Sir John Shackell, is one."

"Who in the devil's name have we here?" said the Duke. "This is not the language of a serving-man; nor are those the features of a low-born hind. Sirrah! tell me thy name—who, and what art thou?"

"My name, great Duke," answered the prisoner, "is Alfred Bohun; and I am the poor slave and serving-man of the valiant knight Sir John Shackell."

"We will talk to thee more of this anon," said the Duke, whose admiration of the self-devotion and bold bearing of the prisoner, had already extinguished the feelings of anger and exasperation which had at first been enkindled in his bosom. In the mean time, Sir Alan Buxhall, see that ye take better care of the serving-man than you did of the master. Conduct your prisoner back to his dungeon, and await our farther orders as to his ultimate destination."

Alfred was again conducted to his place of con-

finement, again heard the harsh grating of the dungeon locks, and found himself the solitary tenant of the same low, narrow and melancholy chamber as before. He found his spirits, notwithstanding, comparatively buoyant and exhilarated, on account of the conviction which he felt of the safety of his master; and he began to perceive that his own share of punishment was not likely to be very overwhelming. His mind, therefore, had now leisure to expatiate on more agreeable ideas than such as had lately occupied it. It was now filled with the image of Elizabeth Holland: once, and once only had he beheld that paragon of female beauty—their eyes had met for an instant, but that instant had sufficed to fix the image of each on the soul of the other. That sylph-like form, that sparkling eye, that high pale brow, had lived in the memory of Alfred Bohun ever since, and the perilous adventures in which he had been subsequently engaged had not been able to erase them. The undefinable impression which the first sight of the lady had made on his mind, was deepened by their recent and unexpected interview. To her intercession, too, on that occasion, he was indebted for the preservation of his life. Can it therefore be wondered at, that with a youthful and susceptible heart, with so peerless

an object to rouse all that heart's warmest affections, and with the concurrence of so many circumstances of an extraordinary and romantic nature, Alfred Bohun should find himself in love? He had not long made this discovery of the state of his feelings, before he heard his prison door slowly unbarred, and with a beating heart he beheld, by the dim twilight which was all that now illumined his cell, a female form approaching. The gaunt, grim figure of Sir Alan Buxhall followed, bearing a lamp in his hand, which he placed on the ground. "Lady!" said Buxhall, "it is impossible to refuse the request of so fair a petitioner. You will, however, be pleased to make your interview with this youth of as short a duration as possible, and I will wait without, for the purpose of escorting you to your chamber when it shall be over." Thus saying he retired, and left the Lady Elizabeth and Alfred Bohun alone in the apartment.

"Sweet lady!" exclaimed the youth, "how do I deserve this kindness and condescension? You have already saved my life, and you now bestow upon me that which above all things renders life desirable to me, the bliss of being in your presence."

"Speak lower, gentle Sir, for heaven's sake," said the lady. "Misconstrue me not, I beseech

you. I fear that I have taken a bold and unmaidenly step in paying you this visit, but impute it not to any other motive than the interest naturally excited by your extraordinary situation and conduct this day, and a desire to know whether I can in any manner alleviate the situation of one who is evidently far superior to the character which for a season he has chosen to assume."

"And do not *thou* misconstrue me, sweet lady," said Alfred, "nor believe that I am any other than what I seem to be."

"Nay, nay," said the lady, half smiling, "credulous and confiding as our sex are known to be, I am too much of a sceptic to give credence to the story of Sir John Shackell's serving-man. When I first met you, you were coming out of the Palace at Westminster, richly habited, and in the company of a person well known about the Court."

"I do beseech you, madam," said the youth eagerly, "question me not on that subject. I am for the present what I appear to be; my honour and my duty forbid me to be otherwise."

"'Tis marvellous," said the lady, "that you who seem fitted to shine at Courts, should choose to be immured in a dungeon. Tell me thy real name and rank. Perhaps thou art one of those misguided

lords, whose traitorous designs have lately been discovered and frustrated. "My father is all-powerful with the King, and I am all-powerful with my father; I will procure thy pardon. Save thyself, I beseech thee."

The lady uttered these words with great animation, and in the warmth of her appeal she seized the youth's hands and pressed them in her own. A deep blush suffused her cheeks as she became conscious of her inadvertency, and she would have withdrawn her hands, but Alfred now retained them in his vigorous grasp. "Gentlest lady! accept all that Alfred Bohun has to give, his soul-felt thanks, for this generous sympathy on his behalf; still let the poor prisoner live in your memory, and a time may yet come that he may venture to utter from his lips that which you would now think in him an almost impious boldness to have nursed in his heart."

The lady looked upon him with a stare of assumed vacuity and unconsciousness, but the blood that rushed to her cheek told that her heart had interpreted, with sufficient accuracy, the meaning of his expression. She shaded her face with her small white hand, for a moment, and when she again exposed it to the youth's view, the intrusive glow had passed away from it, and left it as pale as marble.

—"If then, Sir," she said, "the proffer of my poor services in your behalf are declined, fare you well ! Forget not, nevertheless, should any emergency occur on which they may be useful, that you may rely on the good offices of Elizabeth Holland."

"Stay, stay, sweet lady !" said the youth : "leave me not thus. Say that I shall see you yet again—if it be but to give me an opportunity, in the presence of so sweet a counsellor, of talking over your proposal. Your reasons may yet convince me. I have need too of some one to whom I may confide my sorrows. Say that you will grant me but one more interview."

"I know scarcely," said the lady, "that I ought to say so much ; yet having ventured on this boldness, I will even go a little farther in the hope of rescuing you from that which is, I fear, a situation of great peril. On the morrow, therefore, at this same hour expect once more to meet me."

"Thanks, generous fair one," said Alfred, kneeling down and kissing her hand. "All good angels guard the friend of the mourner and the captive !"

While these events were passing at the Tower of London, the two knights, Sir Robert Hawley and Sir John Shackell, had secured themselves from the violence of the Duke of Lancaster and his emissaries in the Sanctuary at Westminster Abbey.

Numerous invitations arrived to them from the King and the Duke;—flattering promises, angry threats, specious arguments, all were unremittingly employed to induce them to come forth from the Sanctuary, and to avow in what place their prisoner was to be found. The stout knights, however, remained inexorable; they said that the prisoner or the ransom-money was theirs, and that as the King and the laws would not protect them in the maintenance of their just rights, they would continue under the protection of God. Above six months passed over their heads and still they remained in the Sanctuary, in the neighbourhood of which the Duke's emissaries continued to prowl, in the hope of being able to catch them straying beyond the sacred boundaries. The principal anxiety which Sir John Shackell had at first felt during this period, was as to the fate of his generous servant, Alfred; but he afterwards received several communications from him, saying, that he suffered no inconvenience at the Tower beyond the restraint upon his liberty; which, so far from being felt as a grievance by him, was, from circumstances which he said he should on a subsequent occasion have an opportunity to communicate to Sir John Shackell, the source of his greatest earthly comforts. The

Duke of Lancaster's expedition to Castile, was in the mean time fully equipped and on the point of sailing. John of Ghent was, however, very unwilling to quit England, unaccompanied by the Count de Denia, whose name, he knew, would be like a watchword in his favour in the ranks of the native Castilians. He therefore determined to venture on the bold step of violating the rights of Sanctuary for the purpose of possessing himself of the persons of the two knights, on whom, should it be necessary, he determined even to try the torture for the purpose of compelling them to give up their prisoner. He therefore put his chosen emissaries, Sir Ralph Ferries and Sir Alan Buxhall, at the head of a band of fifty men, and commanded them to proceed to the Abbey, and endeavour, if possible, by persuasion or stratagem, to induce the two knights to surrender themselves to them; but if they should be unable to do this, to seize them even at the very altar and carry them prisoners to the Tower. These banditti, on arriving at the Abbey, found the knights engaged with the Abbot and the Monks at mass. Sir Robert Hawley was in the midst of the worshippers, but Sir John Shackell was kneeling in the outer circle and near the very extremity of the boundary line of the sanctorial limits. Both, however, as well as

the monks, were so fervently engaged in their devotions, and the solemn strains of religious music, which swelled through the long aisles of the Abbey, so completely filled the ear and rapt the imagination, that the invaders had marched up to the choir and surrounded Sir John Shackell before any one had observed their presence.

"Seize him—bind him!" was the immediate mandate pronounced in the stern harsh tones of Sir Alan Buxhall. The music of the choir instantly ceased, the sacred symbols dropped from the hands of the terrified worshippers, and the monks would have rushed out of the Abbey, had not the Abbot, in loud and most imperative accents, commanded them to stand firm. "What!" he exclaimed, "do you fear the enemies of the Lord, while ye have hold of the very horns of the altar? Back, sons of Belial, back!" he added, advancing his silver crosier above the heads of the soldiers: "profane not the dwelling-place of the Most High with your naked weapons."

"Most Reverend Father," said Buxhall, bending his knee, and affecting a look of the most profound reverence and humility, "we come only in obedience to the King's command to seize two arrant traitors. We come to purify the Church, not to offer violence in its holy places. The rights of sanctuary, holy

father, were surely never meant to extend to perjured traitors."

"Sinful brother," said the Abbot, somewhat softened by the knight's respectful tone, "if thou hast erred through ignorance we will ourself intercede for forgiveness for thee from on high, upon thy expressing penitence and contrition and releasing the knight whom thou hast seized at the very altar, from thy grasp. But that thou mayest know that he is entitled to the privileges of sanctuary in this place, listen while our brother reads to thee the grant of the Blessed King Edward the Confessor."

Thus saying, he motioned to a monk who stood near the altar, and who advancing unrolled an ancient parchment which he held in his hand, and read the following words:—

"Edward, by the Grace of God, King of Englishmen. I make it to be known to all generations of the world after me, that by especial commandment of our Holy Father, Pope Leo, I have renewed and honoured the holy church of the Blessed Apostle, St. Peter, at Westminster, and I order and establish for ever, that what person of what condition or estate soever he be, from whencesoever he come, or for what offence or cause it be, for his refuge into the said holy place, be assured of his life, liberty, and limbs:

and moreover, I forbid (under the pain of everlasting damnation) any minister of mine or my successors, to intermeddle them with any of the goods, lands, or possessions of the said persons taking the said sanctuary ; for I have taken their goods and livelihood into my special protection ; and therefore I grant unto every and each of them, (inasmuch as my terrestrial power will suffice,) all manner of freedom or joyous liberty ; and whosoever presumes or doeth contrary to this my grant, I will that he lose his name, worship, dignity, and power, and that with the great traitor, Judas, who betrayed our Saviour, he be in the everlasting fire of hell. And I will and ordain this, that this my grant may endure as long as there remaineth in England either dread or love of the Christian name."

Ferries and Buxhall listened with the most profound attention as the monk read, in the hope of being able to find something in the grant on which they could ground a pretence that the two knights did not come within its provisions: "Casuistry will not help us," said Sir Alan to his colleague. "But blows will," said the other. "Is the will of a living king to be thwarted by that of one who has been dead these three hundred years? Fellows," he added, elevating his voice, and addressing his men-at-arms, 'seize Sir Robert Hawley!'

“ Forbear, forbear !” said the Abbot of Westminster, “ or, in the name of the holy and blessed Trinity, I pronounce you accursed and excommunicate.”

“ Mind not the ravings of these effeminate priests,” said Sir Ralph Ferries. “ Soldiers of King Richard, do your duty.”

The soldiers did not hesitate for a moment as to whether they should obey the Abbot or their commander. They advanced with their pikes fixed upon Sir Robert Hawley. The monks fled in all directions, leaving the knight standing alone in the middle of the church. “ By Heaven !” he exclaimed, drawing his sword and striking aside the first halbert that was presented at him ; “ what strength God has given me shall be exerted to resist your unjust and unholy purpose.” He then raised his arm and stood in an attitude of defence, when one of the men-at-arms, rushing upon him, struck him a violent blow on the head with his halbert, and amidst the shrieks of the spectators who now filled the Abbey, the oaths of the soldiers, and the deep muttered anathemas of the Abbot and the monks, the unfortunate Hawley sunk a bleeding corpse upon the pavement.

The indignation of the spectators now seconded the holy horror of the ecclesiastics. “ Curse them, curse them to the lowest pit of Tophet !” they exclaimed. The monks did not need this excitement

to urge them to put their threats in execution. The consecrated tapers were lighted, and threw a sudden blaze of splendour over the whole church, which seemed almost preternatural, while the Abbot read the sentence of excommunication. "In the name of Christ,"—thus the sentence ran,—“we the Abbot and brethren of the holy church of the blessed Apostle, St. Peter at Westminster, in behalf of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and in behalf of St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, and in our own behalf, do pronounce to be excommunicated and accursed, you, Sir Ralph Ferries, you, Sir Alan Buxhall, and all your aiders, abettors, and confederates, who have this day violated the privileges of sanctuary and committed foul murder in this holy place. Be ye, therefore, excommunicated and accursed, and separated from all the society and from entering into the Holy Mother Church where there is forgiveness of sins, and be you *anathema maranatha* for ever with the devils in hell. Fiat! Fiat! Fiat!—Amen.”

As the Abbot concluded the sentence the lights were as suddenly extinguished as they had been kindled, and the assembly was enveloped in darkness, while a noisome stench proceeded from the quenched tapers, and the monks exclaimed, each

raising his voice to its utmost pitch: "So may every soul be extinguished and stink in hell which has incurred this sentence."

"Let us away, Ferries!" said Buxhall. "I fear that our masters will have little cause to thank us for this day's business. The prisoner whom we have taken alive must be carried to the Tower, and let the monks, if they will, canonise the carcase of the other."

Thus saying, the soldiers made towards the gate of the Abbey, with Sir John Shackell in their custody. The mob seemed at first inclined to oppose their departure, but, after a moment's pause, they made way, and even shrunk back from them, while a general shudder ran through the assembly, as though they were fearful lest their very garments should suffer contamination by coming in contact with the excommunicated persons: sullenly and in silence, therefore, and amidst curses not clamorous and boisterous, but deep and low, the two knights, with their men-at-arms and their prisoner, passed out of the Abbey.

The reader must now, once more, direct his attention to the Hall of Justice in the Tower of London, where, on the day after the occurrence of the events which we have just narrated, the Duke of Ex-

eter again presided for the purpose, among other things, of examining Sir John Shackell on the charges of treason which were preferred against him. The Duke wore the same severe and dignified aspect by which he was generally distinguished, but traces of personal and private sorrow were visible on his countenance; his voice was low and broken, and he often seemed with difficulty to suppress a sigh which struggled in his bosom. The Lady Elizabeth Holland was also there, but, instead of being seated as formerly at her father's right hand, on the bench, she stood on the floor of the court, in the place appropriated to the accused. She leaned on the arm of a female attendant; her eyes were red with weeping, and her gentle form trembled like an aspen-tree. Near her was placed Alfred Bohun, with his arms bound behind him, but with head erect, and his stately form drawn up to its utmost stature. At the other end of the bar stood Sir John Shackell, not bound, but in the custody of Ferries and Buxhall, one of whom stood on each side of him with a naked sword in his hand. The background was filled up by the yeomen of the Tower in their scarlet liveries, and with their halberds in their hands; while some of the domestics, and other inhabitants of the fortress, crowded into

the midst, anxious to be spectators and auditors of the proceedings.

Before, however, the events of that day are narrated, the reader must be informed of what took place in the Tower after the interview between Alfred Bohun and the Lady Elizabeth, which we have already described. The lady had, it will be remembered, promised to repeat the interview on the following day, and she was faithful to her promise. That meeting, however, was not the last. She found herself more interested in the fate of the prisoner at each succeeding visit ; their interviews became longer and often repeated. The high spirit, the polished manners, and the cultivated mind of Alfred, combined with his fine form, handsome features, and romantic situation, began to make an impression on the susceptible heart of Elizabeth. The wild notion too that his birth and fortunes were superior to his apparent condition, took complete possession of her mind, and she at length resigned herself to the influence of a passion which she entertained for a person who she fondly and confidently hoped was not her inferior in rank and blood. Sir Alan Buxhall became uneasy at these frequent and protracted interviews, and quickly divined the nature of the feelings which the young persons entertained to-

wards each other. Conscious of his own share in the fault committed, and fearful lest the Duke of Exeter should learn from some other quarter that he had been so negligent of his trust, Sir Alan determined himself to inform the Constable of his daughter's visits to the prisoner. The offended pride and indignation of that nobleman raged beyond all bounds. It was with the utmost difficulty that he was restrained from ordering the immediate execution of Alfred Bohun; and had not Buxhall placed himself against the door of the apartment, so as to prevent his egress, he would have rushed to his daughter's chamber and buried his sword in her bosom. He at length contented himself by commanding that Alfred should be heavily ironed, and his daughter confined to her own room, and that both should be brought before him on the morrow, to receive such sentence as he should pronounce. As Buxhall and Ferries in the evening of that day made Shackell their prisoner, it happened that the knight was arraigned at the tribunal of the Constable at the same time with the two lovers.

"Sir Knight," said the Duke of Exeter, "although our mind is at this moment oppressed with our own weighty cares; although a princess, in

whose veins runs the blood of Plantagenet, now stands before us charged with having so far forgotten her father's honour and her own as to place her affection on a vile and low-born hind :"—here, for a moment, he was unable to proceed, from the violence of his passion :—" yet," he added, " offences committed against our Lord the King claim our first notice ; and therefore, Sir John Shackell, we again call upon thee, to say whether thou art yet determined to resist the gracious pleasure of his Highness, and to refuse to give up to him the person of the Count de Denia. Thou seest what has already resulted from thy contumacy : blood has been spilt within the walls of the holy sanctuary, and the soldiers of the King have been placed under the ban of excommunication."

" It is too true, O Duke," said Sir John Shackell, " that the holy sanctuary has been violated, and that the blood of my friend has stained its sacred floor. Peace be with his ashes," he added, crossing himself, " and may thy vengeance, O Heaven ! fall on their heads, who have alike profaned thy shrine, and robbed him of his life, and me of my liberty."

" The errors of the past, Sir Knight, said the Duke, " cannot be retrieved, and the life of a man

is as water spilled upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again. Peace be with Sir Robert Hawley's spirit ! Thou, Sir Knight, wilt best show thy attachment to thy deceased friend, by doing that which will prevent the recurrence of similar violence. Give up your prisoner, and accept the King's pardon."

"I have committed no crime. I require no pardon," said the knight. "My Lord Constable, it is thou who ought to sue to me for pardon, for thus holding me a prisoner in defiance alike to the laws of God and man."

"Bear him back to his dungeon," said the Duke. "On the morrow at noon, if he does not think better of his determination, let him die the death of a traitor on Tower Hill."

A dreadful groan burst through the whole assembly as the Duke pronounced the fatal sentence. At the same moment a loud shout was heard from without, mingled with cries of "Make way ! make way ! Room for the Lord Bishop !" The doors at the end of the Hall flew open, and the Bishop of London, the Abbot of Westminster, and a number of other ecclesiastics, in their sacerdotal robes, entered the apartment.

"John Holland, Duke of Exeter, Constable of

the Tower of London," said the Bishop, "I demand of thee the body of Sir John Shackell, Knight, unlawfully and impiously carried away from the place of sanctuary in the church of St. Peter at Westminster."

"Thou mayest have it on the morrow, my Lord Bishop," said the Constable, "shortly after the hour of noon."

"Bethink thee, Duke of Exeter," said the Bishop, "to what wrong and scandal thou art lending the sanction of thy high and honourable name."

"My Lord Bishop," said the Duke, "I am but obeying the commands of my master the King, under whom I hold this fortress."

"In the name of thy master's Master, Duke of Exeter! in the name of the King of Kings!" said the Bishop, "I command thee to release this man from thy custody, otherwise I pronounce thee excommunicated and accursed."

The Duke changed colour, and his bosom was seen to heave violently beneath his robes. The censures of the Church were in those days such as not even a nobleman of his great power and station could defy with impunity. He seemed to be deliberating for a season on the course which he should pursue; and as each eye was fixed on his counte-

nance, the most intense silence prevailed in the hall, which was at length broken by a loud flourish of trumpets and shouts of "Make way! make way! Room for the King of Castile and Leon!" The hall doors once more flew open, and bearing a sceptre in his hand, clothed in royal robes, and wearing a crown on his head, John of Ghent entered the hall, followed by a numerous retinue of lordly and knightly adherents. All present rose up to receive this personage, and the Duke of Exeter, descending from the tribunal, led him up to the seat which he had just occupied, and took his own station on his left hand, a little below him.

"Sir John Shackell," said the Duke of Lancaster, addressing the prisoner, "we, as well as our royal master and nephew, are anxious to put an end to the commotions which now afflict the good cities of London and Westminster, by reason of the unhappy events of yesternight. We are also, my good Lord Bishop, anxious to make reparation for the fault committed by our retainers, in the excess of their zeal, and to provide for the repose of the soul of the unfortunate knight who was slain in the sanctuary."

"Thou speakest like a Christian prince," said the Bishop. "The holy Church is willing to receive even the most heinous offenders once more into her

bosom, on their expressing sincere repentance and repairing the offences which they have committed."

The Duke bowed his head with such an expression of penitence and humility as he could mould the haughty and imperious cast of his features to.—“Now, Sir John Shackell,” he said, “hear the gracious proposition of our Sovereign Lord the King. Discover and deliver up the Count de Denia, who is doubtless now languishing in some miserable obscurity, under the guardianship of your myrmidons, and the King will settle upon you lands to the value of one hundred marks a-year, and pay you down five hundred marks in ready money, in lieu of the noble Count’s ransom. The King will also, for the satisfaction of the Church, at his proper charges, erect a chantry of five priests for ever, to pray for the soul of Sir Robert Hawley! Say, Sir John, say, reverend prelates, are ye content?”

“In the name of our Holy Mother Church,” said the Bishop of London, “I accept the King’s offer, and remove the excommunication pronounced upon those concerned in the death of Sir Robert Hawley.”

“And I too,” said Shackell, “should be content,

on being assured that these terms proposed shall be truly and faithfully performed."

"By the word of two Kings," said the Duke of Lancaster, unrolling a parchment, "and by the great seal of England, hereunto annexed, art thou assured. Moreover, my treasurer, who stands beside thee, shall on the instant count thee down the sum of five hundred marks as soon as thou sayest that thou art content."

"Then may it please your Grace," said Sir John Shackell, "I am content."

The Duke's treasurer immediately advanced to the knight, and placed a purse of five hundred marks in his hand.

"Now then, Sir Knight," said John of Ghent, "it remains for you to produce your prisoner."

"He is in your Grace's presence," said Shackell.

"How! what sayest thou?" exclaimed the Duke, looking round the room. "We understand thee not?"

"Unloose these vile bonds," exclaimed the knight to those around him, and advancing towards Alfred Bohun, who with head depressed, and fettered limbs stood a culprit before the tribunal. "Come forth, thou paragon of honour and fidelity; Gusman Count de Deñia, who rather than break

thy plighted oath hast consented to perform menial services towards a poor knight, to resign thy liberty, and even to endanger thy life."

"The Count de Denia, thy serving-man!" exclaimed the Duke of Exeter. "Fellows, unloose his bonds. Pardon, most noble and chivalrous gentleman, the ignorant indignities which I have shown thee."

"And welcome, thrice welcome, fair cousin," said the Duke of Lancaster, descending from his seat and approaching the Count, "on thy restoration to liberty."

"Liberty," said the Count, "is now indeed welcome to me, for it has not been purchased at the expense of my honour. If I can by my own efforts, most gracious Sovereign, for the restoration of your royal spouse, the Lady Constantia, to the throne of her ancestors, repay you for my liberty, I shall feel prouder and happier than if I had never been a prisoner."

The hall rang with the acclamations of all present; but the Count de Denia raising his hand, motioned them to silence. "Peace, gentle friends," he said; "I pray you, peace. I have something for the ear of his Grace of Exeter. My liberty may prove advantageous to the cause of my Sovereign.

but it cannot in any way be conducive to my own happiness, if unaccompanied by another boon—the hand,” he added, approaching the Lady Elizabeth, and clasping her in his arms, “ of this fair lady.”

“ Thou hast it, Count,” said the Duke of Exeter, “ with as hearty good-will as that with which, but half an hour ago, I would have refused it thee.”

“ Gentle Elizabeth,” said the Count, pressing his blushing but unresisting bride to his heart ; “ on my return from my first and only visit to the palace at Westminster, in which I accompanied my honoured father, it was my chance to cross thee on thy path. Within the walls of the Tower of London only have I since beheld thee. Let us hope that the acquaintance which was begun within sight of a palace and matured in a prison, may continue through many happy years in the ancient and princely mansion of my ancestors in Castile.”

There is nothing to add to the story of “ the Spaniard’s Ransom,” except that the wish thus expressed by the Count de Denia proved prophetic.

The Pennon of St. George.

“ Hang out your banners.”

MACBETH.

The Pennon of St. George.

IN the year 1380, when the crown of England was worn by Richard the Second, and that of Portugal by Ferdinand the First, the latter monarch had involved himself in a war with the King of Castile, in which he succeeded so ill, that, instead of making conquests upon his enemy, he had drawn him into his own dominions. He immediately applied for assistance to England, and although that nation was already sufficiently troubled both by foreign and intestine broils, the Duke of Lancaster, who swayed the realm during the minority of the King, and who himself laid claim to the crown of Castile, by reason of his marriage with Constantia, the daughter of Peter the Cruel, was in hopes, that by sending troops into Portugal they might be serviceable in promoting his own affairs. With this view, after the Parliament had approved of the intended expedition, and granted a supply to carry it on, he caused the chief command to be given to his brother the Duke of Cambridge.

The Duke of Cambridge and his army, composed of English and Gascons, remained for a considerable time with the King of Portugal at Lisbon. The news of their arrival was of itself sufficient to cause the Castilians to retreat. The visitors had, therefore, leisure to reconnoitre the country, to enter into intrigues, and to form alliances. A marriage which was agreed upon between the daughter of the King of Portugal and the son of the Duke of Cambridge, also lengthened their stay in Lisbon and the neighbourhood, and drew closer the ties of intimacy and good fellowship between the English and the Portuguese.

One of the most renowned knights in the army of the Duke of Cambridge, both for valour and courtesy, was Sir John Sounder, an illegitimate son of Edward the Black Prince. This knight had already greatly distinguished himself in the wars in France, Flanders, and Spain, and now burned with desire to add to his laurels. He was therefore somewhat annoyed at the state of inaction in which the English army remained at Lisbon, although he stood high in the favour both of the King and the Duke, and both princes took every opportunity of testifying the sense which they entertained of his merits. Circumstances, however, soon occurred, which ren-

dered his residence at Lisbon less irksome to Sir John Sounder than it had been, and made him look forward with uneasiness to the period at which it was to terminate.

In the palace of the King of Portugal, and in attendance upon the Queen, resided the Lady Isabella de Medina, a beautiful and accomplished maiden, who was distantly related to the royal family, and who formed one of the principal attractions of the court. This lady had been contracted, much against her inclination, to Don Guzman, the brother of the King of Castile, and the war which soon afterwards broke out between that monarch and her own sovereign was hailed by her as the happy means of her deliverance from this detested union. Sir John Sounder, young, gallant and amorous, no sooner beheld the Lady Isabella than he became deeply fascinated with her charms. Her participation in the royal blood of Portugal rendered it little less than madness in the English knight to foster the passion which he felt for her. Illustrious as the arms upon his shield denoted him to be, yet the bar of bastardy there presented what appeared to be an insuperable obstacle to the completion of his happiness. He, however, had the satisfaction to perceive, that Isabella did not regard him with

indifference, and that his society seemed to be more than ordinarily acceptable to her. It was a long time before he found any opportunity for a private interview with her, but that opportunity at length occurred. He then disclosed to her the secret of his passion, and received with rapture a declaration from her lips that she returned it with an ardour equal to his own.

Their interviews now became frequent, although from prudential motives they kept them as secret as possible from the rest of the household. The heart of the English knight beat with rapture, and his whole thoughts were turned to the project of effecting his mistress's escape from the palace, and solemnizing their nuptials. One evening, however, when the knight met his fair one at the accustomed hour in that part of the gardens of the palace which were appropriated to her use, his pallid face, the distraction of his speech, and the cloud upon his brow, denoted that some unforeseen misfortune had befallen them.

"Dearest Knight," exclaimed Isabella, as she returned the fervent pressure of his hand, "what has happened? Tell me all—ill news flies apace, and if I must hear it, let it be from the lips of my beloved."

"We must part, Isabella," said the knight despondingly.

"Part! oh, never, never!" said Isabella; "it must not, shall not be. I will wander over the wide world with thee. I will cast this palace and all its pleasures behind me. Come weal or woe, come wealth or want, I will share them all with thee."

"Nay we *must* part," said Sir John Sounder; "but only for a time. A few months, or weeks, or perchance, days," and his features brightened as he spake, "will restore me to my Isabella."

"Days, and weeks, and months!" said Isabella weeping, "oh! name not to me Time's odious portions; they never disturbed my thoughts till now, for while thou wert near to me, life seemed but one long day of happiness and love."

"Sweetest!" said the knight, "dry these tears. To-night does the Duke of Cambridge leave this city to take the field against the Castilians. The important and honourable command which I hold in his army compels me to accompany him. I shall return, Isabella, and speedily—perhaps, more worthy of thy love. I go to gather fresh laurels; to combat for the rights of the good King Ferdinand. He may, perhaps, when I return, after having bared my sword and shed my blood in the defence

of his kingdom, smile upon the hopes which he would now annihilate with his frown, and every barrier which opposes itself to our happiness may be removed for ever."

Slender as was the foundation upon which this wild hope rested, still it shed a ray of light upon the darkened spirits of the lovers, and almost reconciled Isabella to the departure of her betrothed. At that moment the sound of a trumpet was heard, which was the signal for the followers of the Duke of Cambridge to assemble round their leader.

"I must away—I must away;" said the knight. "Farewell, beloved!—thine, thine am I, whate'er betides; and thou," he added, "art——"

"Thine, thine," she exclaimed, interrupting him, "for ever, and for ever!"

These mutual vows they sealed upon each other's lips, a few hasty but fervent embraces were exchanged, and then the knight wrung the hand of his fair one, and disappeared through the wicket by which he had entered.

Days, and weeks, and months rolled on; but neither Sir John Sounder nor any intelligence of him reached Lisbon. The war, which it was expected would have been prosecuted with the utmost vigour, languished in an unaccountable manner. It was

suspected that the King of Portugal held secret intelligence with the enemy, and the English and Gascon army remained by his express command totally inactive, at their quarters in Estremoure and Besiouse, and were expressly prohibited from making any attack upon the Castilians. The King of Portugal, moreover, neglected to furnish his allies with the stipulated pay and provisions, so that their camp resounded with expressions of anger and discontent. At length, however, intelligence arrived at Lisbon, that the English, becoming weary of their quiescent situation, had notwithstanding the King's commands attacked and beaten the Castilians in several desperate skirmishes; had taken from them the castle of Fighiere, and even menaced the city of Seville, in which the King of Castile had fixed his head-quarters. In one of these skirmishes, however, a small band of English had been surrounded by a very superior force, and either cut to pieces or carried prisoners into Seville. Sir John Sounder was engaged in this encounter, but no certain intelligence could be gained respecting his fate. He had been seen in the thickest of the fight, performing prodigies of valour, and it was considered but too probable that he had fallen to rise no more. When the lapse of time, without bringing any information

as to his fate, had in the opinion of all converted this probability into a certainty, Isabella saw no longer any necessity for keeping her secret, and revealed to the King and the household the passion which she had entertained for the unfortunate English knight. The monarch chid and pardoned her in the same breath, telling her that he scarcely knew how to lament the death even of so famous a knight, since it had probably saved the royal race of Portugal from degradation and dishonour. He then added, that her future welfare had long occupied his thoughts, and that he had at length fixed upon a bridegroom who was her equal in birth.

“Alas! my liege,” she exclaimed, “talk not to me of nuptials, and of bridegrooms—I have no heart to bestow : it is buried in the grave of the gallant Knight of England.”

“Girl,” said the King sternly, “talk not thus. Thou art the first of thy race who ever dreamed of corrupting the pure stream in thy veins by mingling it with baser blood : the first too, male or female, who ever made effeminate wailing for the dead, however beloved or however famous.”

“I mourn not for the ignoble and the plebeian,” she replied; “I mourn for the gallant son of the most renowned Prince in Christendom.”

“Child,” said the monarch, “England may well be proud of the fame and memory of Sir John Sounder. Had his mother’s descent been as illustrious as his sire’s, his claim to thy hand should have been preferred to all competitors. But for my sake, and for thy country’s, as well as for thy own, thou must let him sleep forgotten in his grave. The wounds of Portugal must be healed—the discords with Castile must be appeased—the English, who now overrun the country to distress and ravage both nations, must return to their island. To-morrow Don Guzman of Castile will be here, to conclude a treaty between his kingly brother and myself, and to crave an interview with thee for the purpose of renewing that nuptial treaty which the war between the two kingdoms, now so happily about to terminate, has so long interrupted. Treat him as his worth and dignity deserve, and as you value your place in my favour.”

As the King left her apartment, Isabella renewed her vows of eternal fidelity to Sir John Sounder, be he living or be he dead. The next day the Prince of Castile sought and obtained the interview which he desired. He was young, handsome, accomplished, and Isabella could not hate him. A second interview took place, and she thought, that had she

never known Sir John Sounder, she might possibly have loved him. This was followed quickly by a third, and she remembered that the English knight was dead, and that the Castilian prince was living. Pressed by the importunities of her lover, impelled by the commands of the King, and forbidden, but feebly, if at all, by the dictates of her own heart, she at length gave her consent to the proposed arrangement; and a day was fixed for the celebration of her nuptials with Don Guzman of Castile.

In the mean time the news of the treaty between the Kings of Castile and Portugal reached that part of the English army, about a thousand in number, which was encamped at Besiouse, and was received there with the utmost indignation and surprise. Their pay had been for a long time in arrear, and no notification had been made to them of the negotiations between the kings. At first they were disposed to disbelieve the intelligence, but the arrival of orders to release their prisoners, and the return of such of their own countrymen as had been captured by the enemy, soon confirmed it. Among the latter was Sir John Sounder, who was received with a shout of exultation and wonder by his comrades, they having mourned for him as one numbered with the dead.

“Gallant knights,” he said, “this news concerns us all, but me especially: the ingrate King of Portugal would sacrifice my affianced bride on the altar of his treachery. One decisive step would restore us all to our rights.”

“Name it, name it! noble Sounder,” exclaimed his comrades.

“The city of Lisbon,” he said, “is now unguarded and reposing in security, relying on this dishonourable peace for immunity alike from its enemies and its allies. The marriage between the Lady Isabella and Don Guzman is to take place three days hence, and unless that accursed event be prevented, we shall be expelled by the joint forces of the kings from the soil, and forced to return to England dishonoured and unrewarded. We are here, five hundred archers and as many spears. Gallants of England and Gascony, what hinders us from marching on Lisbon?—we shall reach it by nightfall on the day of the intended nuptials. Myself will penetrate disguised into the palace, while you prepare to force the city gates when you hear my bugle sound. Said I well, gallants, said I well?”

A murmur of unanimous acquiescence and applause followed the interrogatory with which the knight concluded his address.

“Form then,” he added, “a strict union among yourselves ; hoist the pennon of St. George, and declare yourselves friends to God and enemies to all the world ; for if we make not ourselves feared, we shall not have any thing.”*

“By my faith !” said Sir William Helmon, “ye say well, and we will do it.”

The pennon of St. George was then hoisted amidst deafening acclamations. The soldiers crowded around the national standard, uttering shouts of exultation and defiance. “A Sounder ! a Sounder !” they exclaimed ; “friends to God and enemies to all mankind !”

In the mean time, great and splendid were the preparations which were made at Lisbon to celebrate the nuptials of the Lady Isabella and Don Gusman. On the appointed evening, all the apartments of the palace were one blaze of splendour and magnificence. The tables groaned beneath the weight of the rarest wines and the most delicious viands, and all the rich and noble of the kingdom were assembled under the royal roof. In the principal saloon were gathered together the monarch, the bride and bridegroom, the prelate who was to perform the nuptial ceremony, and the more distinguished of the guests. Here the song and the dance delighted the

* Froissart.

ears and employed the limbs of all. A celebrated poet and minstrel was present, who charmed his auditors by the exquisite manner in which he sang and accompanied himself on the harp, both song and tune being of his own composition. It was during one of the pauses of the dance that the poet, after trying the strings of his instrument with more than his accustomed care, sang and played the following canzonet :—

- “ Sir Knight, heed not the clarion’s call,
 From hill, or from valley, or turreted hall ;
 Cease, holy Friar, cease for a while
 The anthem that swells through the fretted aisle ;
 Forester bold, to the bugle’s sound
 Listen no longer, though gaily wound,
 But haste to the bridal, haste away,
 Where love’s rebeck is tuned to a sweeter lay.
- “ Sir Knight, Sir Knight, no longer twine
 The laurel-leaf o’er that bold brow of thine ;
 Friar, to-day from thy temples tear
 The ivy garland that sages wear ;
 To-day, bold Forester, cast aside
 Thy oak-leaf crown, the woodland’s pride,
 And bind round your brows the myrtle gay,
 While the rebeck resounds love’s sweetest lay.
- “ Sir Knight, urge not now the gallant steed
 O’er the plains that to honour and glory lead ;
 Friar, forget thy order’s vow,
 And pace not the gloomy cloisters now

Chase no longer with bow and with spear,
Forester bold, the dappled deer,
But tread me a measure as light and gay
As ever kept time to the rebeck's lay."

The applause which succeeded the poet's song was astounding, and the company of both sexes were standing up to comply with the mandate at its conclusion, when a stern solemn voice at the other end of the room warbled the following lines to the same tune:—

" Sir Knight, couch thy lance to humble the pride
Of the treacherous bridegroom and false bride;
Holy Friar, I crave of thee
Thy curse upon falsehood and perjury;
Forester, truth to the woodlands is fled,
Here fraud and inconstancy dwell instead;
Haste all from the bridal, haste away,
Ere the rebeck is tuned to a sadder lay."

The consternation which this unexpected incident occasioned was indescribable. All heard the voice, but none could tell whence it proceeded. The company in general split into little parties, and each was inquiring of his neighbour what each was anxious to learn of him. The bride turned pale as death, the bridegroom red as fire; and the King was engaged in anxious whispering with those around him. At length Don Guzman, shaking off the stu-

por which his surprise had occasioned, stood up and said, "Let him, whosoever he may be, who contrary to the laws of courtesy and honour has disturbed the peace of this fair meeting, come forward if he dare, and meet the vengeance of Guzman of Castile."

"That dare I," said a voice from the quarter of the room whence the interruption had proceeded.

A tall thin figure approached, enveloped in a black cloak. The cloak was quickly thrown aside, and exhibited the features of Sir Jo' n Sounder.

An expression of surprise burst from a hundred voices. The bride hid her face in her hands, and sunk into the arms of her attendants; the bridegroom drew his sword, but his hand seemed paralysed with wonder, while the King gazed on in astonishment, and advanced towards the English knight with looks in which surprise and displeasure were blended.

"Don Guzman of Castile," said Sounder, "I am here to defy thee with life and limb."

The Castilian's hand grasped his sword, and he advanced towards the English knight. "Beware! malapert bastard," he said,—"beware how you provoke the wrath of Guzman of Castile."

"I fear nought! I will beware of nought but in-

famy and dishonour," retorted the knight. "I claim the hand and heart of this fair maiden, plighted to me by a thousand sacred vows, confirmed by a thousand chaste embraces, and remembered by at least one constant heart, amidst battle and amidst sickness, in famine and in captivity, in suffering and in solitude, and here!"

"Patience! patience! good Sir John," said the King, "and listen to me. The Lady Isabella is the affianced bride of Don Guzman. Yon colours," he added, pointing to the other end of the apartment, where the banners of Portugal and Castile waved together, "which have so long flouted each other in the hostile field, are now unfurled in amity, and this union will cement still more firmly the auspicious peace which has been just concluded!"

"Perish that inglorious peace!" said Sir John Sounder; "and Heaven forfend that so unholy an union should take place. At least, O King! the rights of English knights and warriors must be respected, let yonder banners be twined together as closely as ye please."

"Speak reverently of the banners, haughty Englishman," said Don Gusman, "or tell me what standard dare be unfurled in opposition to them?"

"The pennon of St. George!" said the knight, in

a voice like thunder. Then stamping violently on the floor, he drew a bugle from his bosom and blew a note, with which the palace reverberated. This note was soon echoed from without. The clash of sabres and the trampling of horses were then heard, followed by a shout of "A Sounder! a Sounder! the pennon of St. George!" and immediately afterwards the gates of the palace were burst open, and a body of armed men, over whose head floated the English banner, forced themselves into the royal presence.

"Ha!" said the King, as he recognized the English knights and commanders among these intruders, "what means this?"

"Sire," said Sir William Helmon, "public and private grievances have alike compelled us to intrude, somewhat perhaps unwelcomely into your Majesty's presence. Since our arrival in this country we have had neither loan nor payment from you—whoever wishes to obtain the love and service of men-at-arms must pay them better than you have hitherto done, the neglect of which we have sometime taken to heart; for we know not on whom we depend, and have thrown the blame, as it turns out, most unjustly on our leader, the princely Duke of Cambridge. Now know for a truth,

that we will be paid our full pay; and if you will not pay us, we must pay ourselves from your country."

The blunt bearing of the English captain seemed to disconcert the monarch not a little. "It is but just, Sir Knight," he said, after a moment's silent reflection, "that you should be paid; but you have displeased me by making excursions against the Castilians contrary to my orders, and at a moment that I was endeavouring to bring about a peace with them. Within fifteen days at least, however, ye shall be fully satisfied. My royal truth and honour do I pledge thereto."

"But, Sire," continued Sir William Helmon, "Englishmen in arms cannot be insensible to the grievances endured by a gallant comrade, and the durance and violence in which a fair damsel is held. Sir Guzman of Castile, we entered this land your enemies; but we expected to encounter a generous and chivalrous foe, not one who wars upon the affections of fair damsels and lends himself to the infraction of plighted holy vows."

"Nor shall your expectations be disappointed, Sir Knight," said Don Guzman. "If this fair lady's hand be not bestowed upon me as freely as the winds of Heaven breathe their blessings on the rose, I renounce it, and Heaven prosper the

more fortunate knight upon whom it shall be so bestowed."

A murmur of applause burst from the lips of all. The King looked uneasy and displeased, but seemed unwilling to be outstripped in the race of generosity and courtesy. "Speak, Isabella!" he said; "it is for thee to make thy choice between the brother of the Castilian King and a wandering English knight, who has risen this day from the grave to disturb the evening's festivities."

"Then here does my choice rest," said the lady, rushing into Sir John Sounder's arms. "Pardon, gallant knight, my fickleness; but I thought that thou wert dead, and importunities and commands were not spared to force me into an union with thy rival."

"Now Heaven's blessing reward thee! sweet Isabella," said the knight, kissing the fair forehead of the lady. "Return, return, to these arms, dearer to this heart than ever."

"Princes, and Lords, and Knights," said Sir William Helman, "then our purpose in making this evening's visit is accomplished. Sir John Sounder, hasten with us to present your fair bride to our prince, and let Portugal and Castile and Europe know, that insult and injury must not be offered

with impunity to those who fight under the pennon of St. George."

Thus saying, the Englishmen left the astounded monarch. Their pay was punctually received at the period stipulated; and then, seeing no chance of being able to disturb the peace concluded between Castile and Portugal, they returned to England, where Sir John Scunder presented his fair bride at court, where she was received into great favour by the King, and his newly-married Queen, Anne, the sister of the Emperor Wenceslaus.

The Line of Lancaster.

“ Let him that is no coward nor no flatterer,
But dare maintain the party of the truth,
Pluck a red rose from off this thorn with me.”

SHAKESPEARE.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

Henry the Fourth.

1399. THE Duke of Lancaster was crowned King, by the title of Henry the Fourth, in October.

The Parliament settled the succession on the House of Lancaster.

1400. A conspiracy was entered into to assassinate Henry, which was discovered to him by the Duke of Albemarle, and suppressed by the vigour and activity of the King.

Robert III. King of Scotland refusing to do homage, Henry marched to the north, and ravaged all Scotland.

Next year the Scots, commanded by Earl Douglas, made an irruption into England; but they were met and defeated by the Piercys at Homeldon near the borders. Whilst Henry was in the north the Welsh revolted, and chose Owen Glendower, a private gentleman, for their prince: and in their excursions they took the Earl of March prisoner.

Emanuel Paleologus, Emperor of Constantinople, arrived in England to crave help against Bajazet, Emperor of the Turks. Henry dismissed him with presents, and promises of aid when his own affairs should be more firmly established.

1401. Henry, to court the clergy, allowed them to burn William Sautre, a clergyman, for heresy, he being a Wickliffite. This was the first execution on account of religion in England.

France demanded Isabella, widow of Richard, as the marriage had not been consummated on account of her youth. Henry not choosing to quarrel with the regents of that nation, complied with their demand.

Henry marched into Wales, but was obliged to content himself with destroying the country, as Glendower retired into the mountains.

1402. The King married Joanna of Navarre; she next year arrived in England, and was met by him at Winchester.

1403. The Earl of Northumberland, who had been very serviceable in placing Henry on the throne, quarrelled with him concerning some Scotch prisoners, and entered into a league with Owen Glendower: but falling sick, his troops were commanded by his son Percy, who was encountered by the King (before Glendower could join him) and entirely defeated and slain near Shrewsbury. Northumberland came to the King at York, endeavoured to excuse his conduct, and was pardoned.

1405. Another insurrection broke out, which was quelled by the Earl of Westmorland.

The Prince of Wales gained two victories over Glendower.

1407. Robert King of Scotland, alarmed for his son James's safety, owing to the violent and turbulent disposition of his own brother, the Duke of Albany, sent his son, about nine years of age to France for his education: but the vessel was taken, and the young Prince was carried to Henry, who detained him a prisoner for many years, but gave him an excellent education.

The Earl of Northumberland, who had again broken out into rebellion, was defeated and slain by Sir Thomas Rokesby, Sheriff of Yorkshire. Soon after this battle Glendower died, and the Welsh insurrection was put an end to.

The imprisonment of Prince James occasioned the death of his father Robert: and Henry kept the Duke of Albany, the Regent, in awe, by threatening to release the young King.

1413. King Henry died.

The Abbot's Plot.

“ How now, father Abbot, I heare it of thee
That thou keepest a farre better house than mee.
And for thy house-keeping and high renown,
I feare thou work'st treason against my crown.”

KING JOHN AND THE ABBOT OF CANTLEBURY.

The Abbot's Plot.

THE deposition and imprisonment of Richard the Second having left the throne of England vacant, the Duke of Lancaster mounted it amidst the acclamations of the nation, and was crowned King by the title of Henry the Fourth. On the day of his coronation he caused it to be proclaimed, that he claimed the kingdom, first by right of conquest; secondly, because his predecessor had resigned his estate and designed him for his successor; and thirdly, because he was of the blood royal and next heir male to King Richard. The last was the most futile and groundless claim of all, for Edmund, Earl of Mortimer, who was then living, was nearer akin to King Richard than the Duke of Lancaster, and was in fact heir presumptive to the throne. When this Earl heard that Henry claimed to be the heir male of the deposed King, he is said to have exclaimed: "*Hæres malus*, indeed! and so is the pirate to the merchant, when he despoils him of all that he possesses." Mortimer, however, saw that

the times were not favourable to the prosecution of his claims, and therefore retired to his estates at Wigmore, where he lived a life of seclusion and privacy. King Henry, soon after his coronation, created his eldest son Henry, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall and Aquitaine, and Earl of Chester; and the Parliament declared him the heir apparent and successor of his father as the King of England.

King Richard, notwithstanding the follies and vices which had characterized his rule, had nevertheless still many and powerful friends, who looked with great jealousy on the assumption of the sovereign authority by the Duke of Lancaster. The province of Aquitaine, of the chief town of which, Bourdeaux, the deposed King was a native, rose simultaneously in his favour; and it was not until after Henry had sent a formidable force under the command of the Earl of Worcester, to overawe them, and planted strong garrisons in their principal towns, that he was able to reduce his transmarine subjects to obedience. This difficulty, however, had scarcely been surmounted, when another, still more desperate and dangerous, threatened the authority and even the life of the new monarch. Several noblemen, who had either originally dissembled, or now repented the assistance which they had given

to the advancement of King Henry, conspired together for his destruction. The historians of the time differ as to the motives which led to this conspiracy; whether it resulted from compassion for the fallen fortunes of Richard, or envy of the sudden greatness of Henry, or from some slight or affront shown by the latter to the great nobles who entered into it: neither is it ascertained with precision, by what means the conspirators were drawn together, or the secret devices of some imparted to the rest; but the following narration will put the reader in possession of the details of the plot.

There was at that time an Abbot of Westminster, remarkable alike for the depth of his erudition and the fervour of his piety, but who was at the same time a bold and daring schemer, and of a haughty, active and ambitious spirit. His manners were also bland and insinuating; he was revered, and almost canonized by the common people, and was in high favour and reputation with the nobility, especially with such of them as had espoused the fallen fortunes of King Richard. To that Prince, the Abbot had ever been warmly attached, and from him had received many marks of consideration and esteem. He also had long cherished in his remembrance a saying which had some years before fallen

from the lips of King Henry, when he was but Earl of Derby, and which is supposed to have had no slight influence in alienating the good Abbot from the new King's cause ; namely, that princes had too little, and religious men too much. At that time the riches of the Church had increased and accumulated to a vast extent, so that many began to regard the holy persons who benefited by it, with a somewhat unloving eye. What open violence dared not grasp, concealed policy endeavoured to inveigle away. The excess of the Church's wealth was alleged to be dangerous, both to the King and the clergy, " as vry likely," says an old author, " to cause want in the one, and wantonness in the other." Many bills were accordingly brought into the parliaments, which were held during the reign of King Richard, for the purpose of making provision for repressing the increase of religious possessions. In these measures it was proposed that inquisition and redress might be had against such religious persons as, under the licence to purchase estates of the value of ten pounds annually, extended their purchases to the yearly value of four-score or a hundred pounds ; and also against such as caused their vilaines to marry free women inheritable, whereby their 'ands eventually came into the

hands of the clergy.* It was even proposed in open Parliament, that the King should seize into his own hands all the temporal livings of religious houses, as being rather a burden than a benefit, to religion. On such occasions the Archbishops of Canterbury and York were often compelled, for themselves and the clergy of their provinces, to make their solemn protestations in Parliament, that if any thing were attempted in restraint of the liberty of the Church, they "would in no wise assent, but utterly withstand the same."

Partly, therefore, from affection to King Richard, and partly from fear lest King Henry should prove as ready to invade as he had been to inveigh against the riches of religious houses, this Abbot was the first fomenter and agitator of this conspiracy. His project was not more boldly and daringly conceived, than it was craftily and subtilly executed. Cautiously and timidly at first he tried the dispositions of the nobles whom he wished to inveigle into his plot. First he observed their tempers and dispositions to King Henry; then he searched more nearly and narrowly, but at the same time warily, tempering his speeches according to the disposition in which he found his hearer, and talking so dubiously and equivocally, that if his plans were approved by the per-

son whom he addressed, he could unhesitatingly avow them, and if otherwise, he could as easily disclaim any sinister intention. At length, on a day in Michaelmas term, he invited to his house such persons as appeared 'to enter most cordially into his views, most of whom were men whose reputation for loyalty was already somewhat equivocal, and who had in some degree fallen under the censure of the Parliament and the King, but by pardons or mitigated punishments had expiated their offences. These were, John Holland, who had been degraded from the rank of Duke of Exeter to that of Earl of Huntingdon; Thomas Holland, his brother's son, who in like manner had ceased to be Duke of Surry, and was now merely Earl of Kent; and Edward, lately Duke of Albemarle or Aumerle, but at present only Earl of Rutland. To these were added the Earl of Somerset and the Lord Le Despencer, formerly Marquis of Dorset and Earl of Gloucester; the Earl of Salisbury, the Bishop of Carlisle, Sir Thomas Blunt, and a priest of the name of Magdalene, who formerly belonged to King Richard's chapel, and so nearly resembled that unfortunate prince in form and feature, that many persons who were well acquainted with the former, frequently mistook the latter for him.

These personages, with a few others, were highly feasted by the Abbot; and after the banquet was over, they withdrew into a secret chamber to devise the means of carrying their project into execution. The Abbot had disclosed the whole details of his plot to the Duke of Exeter—for so we shall style him, and indeed we shall designate the other nobles by the titles of which they had been deprived, as in their conversations they ascribed those titles to each other. This nobleman was the half-brother of the deposed King, and the inveterate enemy of Henry, although he had married his sister. He therefore entered enthusiastically into the Abbot's scheme, and undertook to expound and advocate it to the confederates. He reminded them of the allegiance which they had sworn to King Richard, of the honours and preferments to which he had advanced them, and of their obligations therefore, both in conscience and in gratitude, to take his part against all men. "Did not," he added, "this new King, this Bolingbroke, despoil him of the royal dignity of which he has unjustly possessed himself, and did not we stand still, and show neither the obedience of subjects nor the love of friends, as though we were men who knew better how to do any thing than to defend, and if need were, to die for our

lawful prince and loving patron? King Henry, having violently invaded, or fraudulently insinuated himself into the kingdom of his natural and liege prince, is but a tyrant and an usurper, and such an one as it is lawful for any man by any means to throw down. The laws and examples of the best governed commonwealths, have not only permitted such an action as the overthrow of a tyrant and an usurper, but have highly honoured it with statues, and garlands, and titles of nobility. The deposition of Henry of Lancaster will not only be profitable but necessary for the commonwealth, by extinguishing those wars which the Scottishmen have menaced, the Frenchmen have prepared, and the Welshmen have already begun upon this occasion and quarrel. I doubt not but that our purpose might be accomplished by open arms, but I hold it to be more sure for us, and more safe for the public weal, first to put in proof some secret policy. Therefore, noble lords and gallant gentlemen, my counsel is this, that a solemn just be challenged to be kept at Oxford at Christmas, between me and twenty men on my part, and the Earl of Salisbury and twenty men on his part, to which King Henry shall be invited. The occasion will sufficiently account for our gathering together a large number of armed men, and

when Henry's attention is most attracted by the sports, let him be surrounded and slain, and Richard of Bordeaux once more proclaimed King of England."

The Duke of Exeter had no sooner concluded his address, than the applauses of all present testified their unanimous assent to the wily scheme which had been projected by the Abbot of Westminster. "Then now, my Lords," exclaimed the Bishop of Carlisle, "what remains but to take the oaths, and to seal the deeds which are to bind us to this righteous and patriotic enterprise?" An oath was immediately taken upon the Evangelists, that each would be true and faithful to the other, even to the point and hour of death; and indentures, by which the lords bound themselves to essay their best for the death of King Henry, and the deliverance of King Richard, were sealed and subscribed by all, and a counterpart delivered to each confederate. Then having determined what forces should be drawn together, and by whom they should be commanded, the meeting separated, having ushered through the first stage of its existence the Abbot's plot.

Things being thus contrived, and their minds swelling high with hope, and their imaginations

filled with dreams of power and glory, the Duke of Exeter was deputed to attend upon the King at Windsor, and to crave that, for the love which he bore to the noble feats of chivalry, he would vouchsafe to honour with his presence the martial exercise that was appointed between him and the Earl of Salisbury, and to be the judge and arbiter, should any controversies or disputes arise.

The King not suspecting any treachery, and glad by an act of such easy performance to conciliate the affections of the nobles, readily acceded to the request of the Duke of Exeter. The latter and the rest of the conspirators, now conceiving their purpose to be half accomplished, returned to their respective homes, and busily bestirred themselves in raising men and preparing horse and armour for the approaching enterprise. The Duchess of Exeter, King Henry's sister, soon perceived that her husband was engaged in some secret and desperate undertaking. The private conferences with strangers whom she had never before seen at their house, the Duke's long and frequent absences from home, and abstraction of his manner and demeanour, convinced her that he was engaged in some plot for depriving her brother of the crown, and restoring his own kinsman to the station of which he had been deprived. The con-

test between conjugal and fraternal affection in the bosom of this lady was sharp and long continued. To discover her suspicions to the King would, in the event of their turning out well-grounded, prove the ruin of her husband. To lock them in her own breast would be, to become an accomplice in the destruction of her brother. "And what," she said, as she one day paced her apartment in solitude, while the tears streamed down her cheeks—"is this love then against nature or above it? Shall I be undutiful to my prince, or is there no duty comparable to that of a wife? In what perplexities am I plunged, to see my two dearest friends in this case of extremity, that one must certainly be ruined by the other!"

At that moment the Duke entered the apartment, and, perceiving her in tears, exclaimed, "What means this, Bess? why weep you? take comfort, all will yet be well."

"Comfort!" she replied; "do but give it me, and I will readily take it; give it me by saying that you are not a party to any design for robbing good King Henry of the crown, and replacing it on the brows of him who has been declared by the voice of all England unworthy to wear it."

"Sweetest," replied the Duke, "content your-

self ; whatever happens. evil cannot befall you, or a worse evil befall myself, than that with which I am now environed. If my purpose should prevail, and my brother be restored to the throne, both you and I assuredly will never decline ; and if it be prevented, and your brother continue still in his estate, no harm can happen to you, and I shall but then be sure of that destruction of which I am now in continual dread, and the fear of which in expectation is a greater torment than the pain in sufferance." Thus saying he kissed her, and leaving her a prey to a thousand tormenting thoughts, he took his journey towards Oxford, with a great company of archers and horsemen. There he arrived, as had been agreed upon, one day previous to the expected coming of the King, and found all the confederates and their retainers duly assembled, with the exception of the Duke of Aumerle.

The non-arrival of this nobleman filled the conspirators with fear and wonder. His near relationship to both Kings made him form an important link in their project ; and his having formerly been engaged in a plot for the deposition of Henry and the restoration of Richard, had made them calculate certainly on his co-operation. Now, however, they began to fear that he had secured his own safety by

the sacrifice of his associates. Some, nevertheless, only blamed him for tardiness and delay, and dispatched a messenger to him to urge his immediate coming. Before, however, the messenger came to the Duke, the latter had departed from Westminster for the purpose of proceeding to Oxford; but instead of taking the direct road to the latter city, he had called to pay a visit to his father, the Duke of York, at his palace in London. The Duke of York stood high in the favour of King Henry, and had by his intercession procured from the monarch his son's pardon for his former treason. This, however, was only granted on condition of York's becoming security and pledge for Aumerle's allegiance, and of the latter's being degraded from the rank of Duke of Aumerle to that of Earl of Rutland. On this occasion he despatched a hasty meal with his father, and was taking his leave of him, for the purpose of proceeding to Oxford, when the Duke of York espied a seal hanging from his son's bosom.

"What seal is that, son Edward?" exclaimed the suspicious Duke. "I pray thee, let me see the writing."

"'Tis nothing, my good Lord, 'tis nothing," replied Aumerle, endeavouring to fold his robe over

the object which had attracted his father's attention, but his cheek first assuming a scarlet hue, and then changing to a deadly paleness.

"Nothing, sayest thou?" echoed the Duke of York; "then 'tis no matter who sees it. I will be satisfied; Aumerle, show me the writing."

Aumerle's confusion increased, and his lip stammered as he said, "Pardon me, I beseech you, my good Lord, it is a paper of small consequence, but which, for some reasons, I would not have seen—"

"And which, for some reasons also, I would see," said York. "I fear, I fear, Aumerle. Give me the paper," he added, as, while his son was for a moment off his guard, he darted upon him and seized a parchment, with a seal dependant from it, from his bosom. A single glance sufficed to show the father the nature of this document. It was a counterpart of the indenture which the confederates had sealed at the house of the Abbot of Westminster. "Treason! foul treason!" he exclaimed: "villain! traitor! slave! Thou knowest that in open Parliament I became surety and pledge, both in body and goods, for thy allegiance, and can neither thy duty nor my desert restrain thee from seeking my destruction? In faith! but I will rather help forward thine." Foaming with rage and indignation, he

commanded his horse to be got in readiness, and immediately took his departure to Windsor, where the King then was, determined to acquaint Henry with the treason of his son.

Aumerle stood for a moment mute and motionless, confounded and astonished at the sudden frustration of the deeply-laid scheme of the confederates, and the jeopardy in which he found himself placed. One moment he cursed his own folly and rashness for involving himself in the scheme of a few disappointed and interested men ; at another his execrations were transferred to the prying curiosity and hasty anger of his father ; but at length he determined to seek his own safety by hastening also to Windsor, and endeavouring to reach that place before his father arrived there, and making his peace with the King, by being the first to discover the plot to him. He needed not excitement to urge him forward ; his youthful blood and his sudden danger supplied wings to his horse swifter than were those of Pegasus ; and long before his father arrived near the castle, he had alighted there. Having entered the castle-yard, there he addressed the seneschal, saying : " Lock straight the castle-gates. Give me the key. Danger, pressing and overwhelming danger, is at hand, intelligence of which I must communicate

to the King, and no one must be suffered to enter the castle until our conference is at an end."

The seneschal bowed respectfully, carefully barred and locked the great gate of the castle, and placed the massive key in the hands of Aumerle, whose near relationship to the King rendered his commands as imperative as were those of the monarch himself. He immediately rushed into Henry's presence, whom he found alone, and falling on his knees before him, seized his hand, which he kissed fervently.

"What means our cousin?" said the King, bending a look of surprise upon him, "that he looks thus wild, and rushes into our presence with such a hurried and disordered demeanour? Rise, cousin Edward, rise, good Rutland, and tell us what brings thee hither?"

"May my knees grow rooted to the ground, and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I rise or speak until I have obtained your Grace's pardon."

"Thou hast it, Edward! thou hast it freely, and on the word of a king. And now, I pray thee, tell me of what offence it is that I have granted thee a pardon?"

"One of so deep a die," said Aumerle, "as there only lives one traitor black enough to commit, and

one king gracious enough to pardon!" Aumerle was a man of many and persuasive words; his tongue was eloquent; his features were manly and expressive; his tears could flow at will; and he could mould his voice and gestures to any expression which he pleased. With these accomplishments, therefore, did he grace the narrative of the Abbot's plot, which he detailed to the King, protesting his own reluctance and unwillingness to enter into the scheme; but that being taken by surprise, and, influenced by persuasions and even threats, he had been induced to enter into the confederacy and sign the traitorous compact; but that his loyalty had returned as soon as the warning voice of conscience was heard, and that now he had come to repair his crime by apprizing the King of the jeopardy in which he stood. The King seemed neither rashly to believe nor negligently to distrust Aumerle's report, neither was it politic for him to receive the discovery angrily or discourteously; he therefore comforted Aumerle with gracious speeches, and said, "If this be true, we pardon you; if it be feigned, at your extreme peril be it."

In the mean time, the Duke of York had arrived at the castle-gates, but was denied admittance. It was in vain that he told the seneschal that the

King's life was in danger, as he received for answer that the Earl of Rutland had already arrived, and was then in private conference with the King, that the key of the castle-gate was in his possession, and that no one could be admitted without his permission. The Duke of York now became alarmed, lest his son should commit some violence on the King while they were closeted together. When, therefore, the conference was ended, and Aumerle permitted the gates to be unlocked, the old Duke rushed into the royal presence with the same precipitation as his son had done before him, and with many exclamations of "treason" and "perfidy," he placed the indenture in the King's hand which he had plucked from Aumerle's bosom. Henry, on reading it, perceived the truth of Aumerle's statement, and therefore confirmed the conditional pardon which he had pronounced. Then having his mind occupied with deeper thoughts than the observance of tilts and tournaments, he laid aside his intended journey, and resolved to await at Windsor the machinations of his enemies, and watch them in the course which they pursued. In the mean time, he directed his letters to the Earl of Northumberland, his High Constable, to the Earl of Cumberland, his High Marshal, and others of his most assured

friends, concerning these sudden and unexpected accidents.

In the mean time, the confederates at Oxford hearing nothing of Aumerle, and seeing no preparations for the King's arrival, doubted not that their plot had been discovered or betrayed. They were, therefore, in hourly expectation of the arrival of a sufficient force to make them all prisoners, and they knew the temper and disposition of King Henry well enough to feel assured that their captivity would be very speedily followed by their execution. " 'Tis that vile intriguing priest," said Gloucester to Exeter, " who has involved us in this dilemma. By listening to his cursed counsels, we have only carried our foolish heads to the block, while he and that double traitor Aumerle have purchased not only indemnity but reward by our destruction. Aumerle will doubtless soon recover his forfeited honours, and this smooth-tongued Abbot will exchange the mitre of Westminster for that of Canterbury."

" Since our safety, Lords," said the Duke of Surry, " cannot be provided for, at least let us not perish unavenged. The headsman's axe shall be welcome to my head, after my sword has made sure of this treacherous Abbot's."

The swords of all the confederates, except that of the Earl of Salisbury, flew from their scabbards as if to second the determination of Surry. "Peace, gentle Lords," said Salisbury; "I pray ye, pause a moment! Our affairs are not yet so desperate as to drive us to the madness of imbruing our hands in the blood of our friend."

"He is a perjured traitor," said Hugh Spenser, Earl of Gloucester, "and his blood shall atone for his treachery."

"My Lord of Gloucester," said Salisbury, "he is none, and his blood shall not be spilt while one drop remains in my veins. He yet hopes that our enterprise may be successful, and I left him even now in earnest conference with the priest Magdalen, concerting the best means of accomplishing it."

"I will trust no more to the devices of priests," said Surry; "our good swords, and the lances of the five hundred followers whom we have brought with us to Oxford, might do something: but these peddling intrigues of churchmen——"

"Peace, my good Lord!" said the Bishop of Carlisle, "the Abbot approaches, and I see comfort in his looks."

The Abbot indeed approached with looks of the utmost confidence and self-satisfaction. He bowed

courteously to all, and neither daunted by the lowering brows and half-unsheathed daggers of the Lords of Exeter, Gloucester, and Surry, nor chilled by the aspects of hesitation and doubt worn by Salisbury, the Bishop, and his more immediate friends, he took his seat amidst the confederates, and proceeded to address them with the most perfect ease and self-possession.

“ My good Lords and noble coadjutors in this most righteous enterprise, our scheme, as far as we have yet proceeded, has failed.”

“ We needed not, my Lord of Westminster,” said Surry, “ your high authority and most reverend wisdom, to assure us of that fact ; it has failed, and our disappointment can only be soothed by blood.”

“ Thou speakest wisely, Duke of Surry,” rejoined the Abbot ; “ and blood thou shalt have.”

“ The blood of whom,” asked the Duke, “ if not of thee, thou hoary traitor !”

“ The blood of Henry Bolingbroke and Edward Aumerle,” said the Abbot. “ One plot must be instantly avowed and promulgated to the people of Oxford.”

“ A most sagacious scheme truly !” said the Duke of Surry ; “ that were to pray the Mayor and burgesses of their kind courtesy to enter this apart-

ment, and to place their knives to the throats of the penitent traitors who now humbly offer up their lives in expiation of the treason which they have meditated."

"My Lords," said the Abbot, who with unconquerable pertinacity bore up alike against the execrations and the sneers of the confederates, "the men-at-arms who have followed us to Oxford would be able, backed by the population of the surrounding counties, to tear the usurper from his castled hold at Windsor, and replace the lawful sovereign on his throne."

An universal shout of derision burst from the confederates. Even Salisbury shook his head despondingly, and said, "My good Lord of Westminster, if you have no better scheme to propose, I fear that our enterprise is indeed at an end. The population of the surrounding counties, notwithstanding their attachment to King Richard, will not, while they know him to be a close prisoner in the Tower of London, be willing to make common cause with us, when, at the first intelligence of our insurrection, the captive monarch's head would be stricken off."

"But if the populace believed that that monarch was no longer captive, but was here in this house, surrounded by his relatives and friends, they would

rise one and all to make common cause with us. Richard's life, Lords, would not be placed in greater jeopardy than it is now by such a movement ; and if we act with promptitude, it might be placed beyond the reach of danger. At any rate, your own safety might be provided for, and the usurper either hurled from his throne, or compelled to yield to such terms as would rescue your lives and fortunes from his grasp."

"The holy Abbot," said Surry, "hopes to amuse us with the details of these hopeful schemes, until the King's forces shall have invested this house in which we are now tranquilly pent up, as sheep for the slaughter. I say, die, traitor!"

As he spoke, the Duke rushed with his drawn sword towards the Abbot ; but the Earl of Salisbury, unsheathing his own weapon, parried the blow, saying, "Back, back ; are ye mad, my Lords? or think ye that the blood of this old man will smooth your path to the favour of King Henry?"

"My Lords," said the Abbot, still undaunted and even unabashed, "I have spread through the city a rumour that King Richard is here ; the populace are even now approaching the house, and could we only for a few hours continue them in their error, we are sure of their co-operation in any enterprise which we may project."

At that moment, a tremendous shout was heard of "God save King Richard!" and the hum of voices and the tramp of feet proclaimed the approach of an immense multitude.

"Death and destruction!" exclaimed the Duke of Surry, "the vengeance of Henry we might possibly have escaped, but how can we shun the fury of an exasperated and disappointed rabble, when they find that King Richard is not here? How, traitor, can we, as thou sayest, continue them in their error?"

"Behold!" said the Abbot, and clapping his hands, a door at the lower end of the apartment flew open, and a person clad in the robes of royalty, wearing a crown upon his head, and bearing a sceptre in his hand, entered the apartment. His tall and stately figure, long flowing yellow hair, light blue eyes, and fair and handsome but somewhat pale and pensive countenance, made all the lords in a tone of joy and wonder exclaim, "Richard of Bordeaux!"

"Bold peers of England!" said the seeming monarch advancing, but the arch smile upon his lip, and the removal of his crown, and the false hair upon his head showing a profusion of luxuriant black locks, dissipated the momentary illusion.

" 'Tis the priest Magdalene," said Surry; " but by Heaven, had he not uncovered his pate, and had continued to wear that melancholy smile, I had sworn allegiance to him. Lords, if we, King Richard's near friends, have been deceived by this stratagem, methinks that the rabble will not be keen-witted enough to detect the imposture."

" 'Tis time to try the keenness of their wits then," said Gloucester, " for they are thundering at the gates:—speak to them, my good Lord Abbot, and unless thy tongue can wind them to our purpose, thy head must pay the penalty."

The shouts now became redoubled. " Show us the King!" " Long live Richard of Bordeaux!" " Down with Bolingbroke!" Such were the exclamations with which the Abbot of Westminster was greeted as he stepped from the window of the apartment in which the confederates were assembled, on to the open terrace or balcony in the front of the house. " Ye men of Oxford," he said, " Richard of Bordeaux, your lawful King, has escaped from the clutches of his enemies, and he now comes to claim the allegiance of his loving subjects and the assistance of their hearts and hands in replacing him on the throne of his immortal grandsire, Edward the Third!"

One long loud peal of approbation and assent rang through the air, and as it died away, a stentorian voice in the crowd was heard exclaiming, "Show us the King—convince us that we are not supporting a selfish faction, but are really contributing to the restoration of our lawful monarch, and we will join with you to the shedding of every drop of blood in our veins."

The most critical part of the Abbot's plot was now to be made trial of. He felt not only that the success of the scheme depended on the personation successfully by Magdalene of King Richard, but that his own life would be immediately sacrificed by the incensed lords, should the populace detect the imposture. He therefore retired into the house, but immediately returned to the view of the multitude, leading Magdalene by the hand, and followed by the Dukes of Exeter and Surry, the King's brothers, and the other lords who were known to be his devoted adherents. One moment's pause followed, it was a moment of fearful and anxious silence, in which the supposititious king was exposed to the jealous scrutiny of a thousand eyes: should one eye in the vast multitude detect the imposture, the conspirators knew that the house in which they were assembled would be razed to the ground, or burst

open by the infuriated mob, and their lives sacrificed to their indignation and disappointment. The priest Magdalene himself had no small difficulty in supporting his part with unshrinking nerves. The critical nature of his situation, however, prevented him from relapsing into that arch smile by which he had discovered himself to Surry. . . He gazed on the mob with that mild melancholy look which had of late years become characteristic of King Richard's countenance; extended his arms towards the populace, in an attitude of affectionate supplication, pointed to the well-known relatives and friends of the deposed king who surrounded him, and at length, when his presence of mind had nearly failed him, and he was about to sink exhausted with anxiety and apprehension to the ground, the welcome cheers of a thousand voices rang in his ears, exclaiming, "God save King Richard!" "We'll die for Richard of Bordeaux!" "On, on to Windsor, and drag the usurper from the throne!"

The whole male population of Oxford soon assumed such arms as on the suddenness of the occasion they could provide themselves with. Knives, daggers, clubs, staves, slings, and arrows, were put in requisition: numbers of associates locked in from the surrounding towns and villages, as soon as the news

was spread that King Richard was at Oxford ; and the Duke of Exeter, who was by acclamation chosen generalissimo, soon found himself at the head of a sufficiently formidable although undisciplined and rudely-armed force, amounting to nearly forty thousand men. The march to Windsor was after a short delay determined on ; and breathing threatening and slaughter against Henry, shouting the praises of Richard, and stirring up the population of the counties through which they passed to join them, this motley army proceeded towards the royal castle for the purpose of seeing and putting to death him whom they now termed a tyrant and an usurper.

The rumour of these proceedings, however, spread so widely and so quickly, that King Henry had early intelligence that the Earls of Huntingdon and Salisbury, the young Earl of Kent, and the Lord le De Spenser, were advancing towards Windsor to seize and murder him ; that they were in sufficient force to take the castle ; that they had with them Magdalene, one of the priests of the chapel royal to Richard of Bordeaux, dressed up as the deposed King, and had caused a rumour to be spread that King Richard had escaped from prison. The person who brought the intelligence said, " Sire, depart hence instantly and ride to London, for they will be here in a short time."

"But how," asked the King, "can I credit your intelligence?—a knowledge of the details which you have communicated to me, could only be known to some one deeply implicated in the plots of the conspirators?"

"They might be known, O King!" said the messenger, "to the grand author and contriver of the plots."

"Assuredly," answered Henry; "but it is not possible that he should be disposed to reveal them to me."

"It is possible, and it is true," said the messenger, throwing back a hood in which he had shrouded his head—"behold and believe!"

The King started, for in the features of the person to whom he was indebted for this information he recognized those of his arch enemy, the Abbot of Westminster.

"The events of one day, Henry of Lancaster," said the Abbot, "have transformed me from your bitterest foe into the implacable enemy of your enemies. Reviled, insulted, and threatened by them with death, the Lords of Exeter, Surry, and Gloucester, can only atone to me for those injuries by their lives. Flee, I tell thee, to London. Canst thou doubt the truth of what I tell thee?—wherefore should I place myself in thy power? This plot,

I tell thee, is my own contrivance, and must prove fatal to thee within an hour, unless thou fleest instantly."

"Bold traitor!" said the King, "I must not, and will not believe thee. What ho, there!"

"Beware!" said the Abbot, checking the exclamation of the King; "provoke not against thyself that same vengeance to which I am now devoting the men with whose hands my own were but yesterday knit in apparently indissoluble bonds of friendship. I have outridden the Duke of Exeter's army, and am scarcely one hour in advance of it. Detain me but one instant, so as to delay me from rejoining it before my departure has been observed, and it will be instantly known that I have betrayed the plot to you, and your flight to London will be so speedily pursued that escape will be utterly hopeless. Let me rejoin the conspirators immediately. Until the castle is taken, which may hold out a few hours, your flight cannot be discovered, and then you will be so far on the road to London as to be beyond the reach of your pursuers."

"Away then with thee!" said the King; "it is but the escape of one traitor which I am risking—away with thee!"

"And away with thee, Henry of Lancaster," said

the Abbot, as he left, the apartment; "if thou wouldst keep thy head upon thy shoulders."

The truth of the Abbot's intelligence was so speedily and certainly confirmed, that Henry, wondering not less at the danger which threatened him, than at the strange manner in which he had been made acquainted with it, mounted his horse and set off secretly, with a few attendants from Windsor, taking the road to London.

The army of the insurgents, on arriving before Windsor Castle, proceeded to lay siege to it, and instead of meeting with an obstinate resistance, they were gratified at finding, after the lapse of a few hours, and before they had committed or sustained any serious damage, that the besieged threw open their gates and invited them to enter. The Duke of Exeter's rage, however, on finding that the King had effected his escape, amounted almost to frenzy, and it was with the utmost difficulty that the Abbot of Westminster and the Bishop of Carlisle could restrain him from putting all whom he found in the Castle to the sword. "My Lords," he said, "Henry is now in the metropolis. The Londoners are devoted to him, and will speedily raise such a force as will effectually enable him to overpower our rash, levied and ill-disciplined troops.

Had we seized and slain the usurper, we might have marched triumphantly to London; his death would have struck a panic into the hearts of his adherents, and the gates of the Tower would have been thrown open to restore our long-lost captive sovereign to us."

"Peace, my good Lord," said the Abbot, "and, instead of wasting our time in idle lamentations, let us study how to repair this fresh misfortune which has beset us. The King will doubtless levy such a force in London as will render it impossible for us to maintain our station here. Let us therefore retreat towards the West. The town of Cirencester is well fortified, and would enable us to bid defiance to the usurper, behind its strong walls, even should it not be advisable to give him battle in the field."

"But, Cirencester, my Lord," said the Duke of Surry, "is under the government of its bailiff, Sir William Beauchamp, King Henry's most devoted adherent, who will not readily open its gates to give us entrance."

"But Sir William Beauchamp is my brother," returned the Abbot, "and may, I think, when I inform him that King Richard is himself with our army, that Windsor Castle is in our hands, and that Henry has but narrowly escaped from us with his

life, be persuaded to make his peace through my intercession with the restored king, (for such I trust he soon will be,) by opening the gates of Cirencester to us. Let me, therefore, precede you on your march, and I doubt not that, by the time you arrive before that town, you will find the bailiff and garrison your firm friends and supporters."

" 'Tis wisely planned," said the Duke of Surry, who now seemed anxious to atone for his former injurious suspicions, by evincing the most unlimited confidence in the Abbot's fidelity and sagacity. " My Lord of Westminster has already proved our guardian angel, and we cannot do better than resign ourselves implicitly to his guidance."

The Duke did not observe the Abbot's countenance, until the sinister expression which it had for a moment betrayed was exchanged for one of the utmost placidity and humility. " The good Duke of Surry," he said, " is pleased greatly to overrate my humble efforts in the cause for which your Lordships are in arms. The success of our stratagem was ensured mainly by the decision and promptitude with which you concurred in it. But how say you, Lords, will you entrust me with the management of the negotiation between you and the Bailiff of Cirencester?"

“ Be it so, my good Lord,” said the Duke of Exeter, “ and speed thee, I pray thee ; for our near neighbourhood to London renders Windsor no safe tarrying place for us, now that Henry has escaped out of our hands.”

“ The bush was well limed,” exclaimed the Abbot as he rode towards Cirencester ; “ the silly fowls are in my snare. Fools ! fools ! Did they think that the spirit which caught fire at a random expression of Henry Bolingbroke, threatening injury to the church generally, could tamely suffer personal insult and scorn—could pardon being branded with the names of traitor, and villain, or forget that naked weapons had been pointed at his breast ? No ! no ! no ! Love may be forgotten, gratitude may perish, even contempt may be surmounted, but the fires of hatred, its real genuine fires, once lighted up in the soul, are unquenchable and immortal as the soul itself.”

With such sentiments possessing his bosom, the Abbot presented himself before his brother the Bailiff of Cirencester. The two brothers were in temper and disposition as much opposed, as were the two political parties which they respectively espoused. The wily, intriguing, malignant, unforgiving Abbot was a perfect contrast to the unsus-

pecting, generous, and perhaps somewhat rash and imprudent Bailiff. The tried soldierlike qualities of the latter, and his devoted attachment to the House of Lancaster, had induced King Henry to intrust him with the custody of the important fortress of Cirencester. His surprise was extreme on beholding his brother, from whom he had been for several years separated, and of whose recent plot for seizing on the King's person at the tournament at Oxford, he had just heard. He listened intently to the Abbot's narration, and to the developement of his plan for getting the chief conspirators into the power of the King's friends. Notwithstanding that he was well aware of the duplicity of his brother's character, the Bailiff was convinced by his tone and manner that he was sincere in his professions of hatred towards the confederates; he only stipulated for the safety of the Earl of Salisbury, who had defended him from the violence of the other conspirators. The Bishop of Carlisle had the same claim on his gratitude; but as the Abbot hoped, that in the event of the Bishop's being sacrificed, he might himself succeed to the vacant episcopal mitre, he did not scruple to seal the destruction of his friend.

A few hours after the interview between the Abbot and the Bailiff, the confederates arrived at

the head of a force of twenty thousand men, and sat down before Cirencester. They immediately summoned the town to surrender, and their summons was answered by a visit from the Abbot, accompanied by the Bailiff and the principal municipal authorities of the place.

"Most puissant Duke of Exeter," said the Abbot, "and ye other gallant lords and gentlemen now in arms for good King Richard, the loyal town of Cirencester, weary of so long bearing the yoke of an usurper, gladly welcomes you within her walls, and prays you to take possession of her citadel in the name of her legal sovereign."

"Is it so, master Bailiff?" asked the Duke of Exeter. "Are even you weary of the usurpation of Bolingbroke, and willing to yield up this fair town to the dominion of your liege lord?"

"It is even so, my good Lord," said the Bailiff. "I would only crave, in consideration of the readiness with which I welcome King Richard's friends into Cirencester, that you would enter the town with only such a retinue as will be sufficient for your safeguard and attendance, and that your army may remain encamped without the walls."

"Six hundred men-at-arms, Sir William," answered the Duke, "are the only visitors with which

we will encumber your town. In the mean time, Sir Thomas Blunt will command the troops without the walls."

The Bailiff bowed assent, although the number of the troops which the Duke proposed should be admitted into the city was more than he had calculated upon. All the men whom he could muster in the town, for the purpose of executing the scheme which he had projected, would not amount to two thousand, for the most part ill-armed and ill-disciplined; while the Duke of Exeter selected for the six hundred troops who should accompany him into the town, the bravest and most experienced veterans. The Bailiff would at first have remonstrated against the quartering of so large a number of troops on the citizens, but the significant gesture with which his brother placed his finger on his lip induced him to acquiesce in silence. Accordingly the Duke of Exeter, the Duke of Surry, the Earl of Salisbury, the Earl of Gloucester, and the Bishop of Carlisle, entered the town at the head of six hundred men, amidst the well-feigned acclamations of the Bailiff and the inhabitants.

That night the lords were sumptuously feasted by the Bailiff in the town-hall of Cirencester. The hospitality and apparent cordiality of the municipal

chief dissipated every particle of mistrust in the minds of the rebel leaders. The Abbot too did not fail to assure them of the zeal and sincerity with which his brother had espoused the cause of King Richard. There were two objects which the wily priest was still anxious to accomplish ; the first was to lessen the number of the troops of the confederates in the town, and the second to prevent the Earl of Salisbury from being involved in the slaughter to which he had remorselessly doomed all his associates. At length, after the Bailiff and the other authorities of the town had retired from the banqueting-hall, he endeavoured to put in practice a scheme which he thought would ensure both those objects.

“ My Lord of Salisbury,” he said, addressing that Earl, “ lives not your ancient friend and comate, the Lord of Berkeley, in this country ? ”

“ He hath a fair castle hard by, on the Severn side,” returned Salisbury.

“ Would that that Lord,” added the Abbot, “ could be induced to join in our enterprise. The whole of the west country, in that event, would range itself under our banners.”

“ There lives not the man in England,” said the Duke of Exeter, “ could so easily win the Lord of Berkeley to our purpose as the Earl of Salisbury.”

"Then why should not the fair Earl," asked the Abbot, "ride down the Severn side, visit his friend, and endeavour to secure his co-operation for the restoration of King Richard?"

"It were dangerous, my good Lord," said the Earl, "to travel now without a competent escort. The King's troops are doubtless by this time scouring the country, and our force beyond the walls is not too numerous to repel any attack which may be made upon them, or able to afford me a few hundred men to bear me company on such a journey."

"But, Peers of England," said the Abbot, "the friendship of the Lord of Berkeley is not a chance to be lightly thrown away. What want we with so large a force as six hundred men within the walls of Circencester? The Bailiff and the townsmen are our especial good friends, and deserve of us rather to have their burdens relieved than heightened. Let three hundred men-at-arms depart with the Earl of Salisbury on the morrow for Berkeley Castle, and I doubt not to see them speedily return with the Lord of that fair castle and his retainers in their company."

The Abbot counsels wisely," said the Duke of Exeter; "and Lords, with your leave, the Earl of Salisbury shall, as early as he wills on the morrow,

depart with the proposed escort towards Berkeley Castle."

The lords present expressed an unanimous consent to this proposition, and then separated for the night ; the Duke of Surry and the Earl of Salisbury retiring to one inn, and the Duke of Exeter, the Earl of Gloucester, and the Bishop of Carlisle, to another.

Early the next morning the Earl of Salisbury, with three hundred men-at-arms, departed from Cirencester ; and the Bailiff having seen them fairly out of the town, and secured the gates after them, summoned his followers, by beat of drum, through the various streets, and soon found near two thousand men at his command in the market-place. The Duke of Exeter, roused by the noise of the gathering of the Bailiff's followers, hastily drew up the three hundred men who yet remained in the town, and marched to the market-place. " Sir William Beauchamp," he exclaimed, " what means this strange and sudden armament ? Dare you venture to break the faith which you plighted but yesterday ? Know you not that the Londoners have delivered King Richard from the Tower, have placed Henry Bolingbroke there in his stead, and are now marching hitherwards in great force ? "

" 'Tis false, thou perjured Earl of Huntingdon," said the Bailiff—"false as thy own false heart."

"Huntingdon!" reiterated the Duke.

"Ay! Huntingdon!" returned the Bailiff. "Thinkest thou that I'll greet thee with thy forfeited honour of Duke of Exeter? No; be content with being styled by the title which yet for a little while remains to thee, and yield thyself my prisoner."

"The prisoner of thee, base traitor! and of thy scoundrel ale-drinkers!" said the Duke scornfully. "Peers, and gentlemen of England, and ye, the gallant soldiers of King Richard, hear ye the base churl's proposal! Answer, as ye are wont to answer the insults of an enemy. Answer as your ancestors answered at Cressy and Poitiers!"

"Forbear! forbear!" said the Abbot, who now appeared by his brother's side; "all is lost! There is no hope of effecting the restoration of Richard of Bordeaux, and I for one do hereby acknowledge King Henry, of that name the fourth, my lawful sovereign."

"Thrice perjured traitor!" said the Duke of Surry, "sayest thou so?"

"Ay, my good Earl of Kent," returned the Abbot, "ye could bare your weapon at the bosom of

an unarmed religious man. How like ye the looks of these good subjects of King Henry, who now resist your efforts to compel them to return beneath the yoke of a tyrant?"

"Parley not with the villain, good cousin," said the Duke of Exeter; "nor fear the array of the brainless, heartless hinds whom he has gathered around him. On, on, bold Peers, strike for your lawful sovereign!—on, on brave soldiers, strike for King Richard and the Commons!"

The disparity between the numbers of the opposing forces was tremendous; but the Duke of Exeter's attack was made with so much zeal and judgment, that it drove the townsmen back several paces. The slings and arrows, however, with which that part of the assailed who had formed the garrison was armed, were soon put in requisition, and hurled back on the Duke's forces a fierce vengeance, while the main body of the townsmen seconded them with their staves and clubs, and speedily succeeded, by the overwhelming strength of their numbers, in breaking the ranks of their enemies. The two Dukes then endeavoured to make good their retreat to their lodgings; but as they tried to effect this purpose, numbers of their followers fell around them. "Fire the town—and destroy the dwellings of the trai-

tors!" exclaimed the Duke of Exeter. This command was not slow in being obeyed. A party of soldiers, under the command of the Earl of Gloucester, speedily collected such inflammable materials as they could get hold of, and the whole town of Cirencester seemed in a blaze. The townsman gazed for some moments in mute and motionless dismay on the destruction of their dwellings, and the Dukes availed themselves of the opportunity presented by their panic to retreat to their inns. The stupefaction which seized the townspeople was but momentary; when they recovered from it they gave a yell of savage vengeance, and proceeded to invest the houses in which their enemies had taken refuge. Stones and arrows were showered in upon them at every pervious place—scaling ladders were applied to the windows, and were mounted by the assailants, one after another, although numbers of them were for a long time swept away as they attempted to advance, by the arrows of the besieged. At length, the weapons, which the Dukes had taught their enemies to use, were turned against themselves; the houses to which they had retreated were set on fire, and the townsman uttering shouts of savage satisfaction, and pointing their bows at such of the soldiers as were seen endeavouring to stop

the progress of the flames, waited calmly watching the destruction of their foes. The Dukes now determined to abandon their places of retreat, and, placing themselves at the head of the wretched remnant of their followers, they rushed into the streets, and made one more desperate sally on the Bailiff and his adherents. The carnage was immense; the life of every soldier who fell was revenged by the sacrifice of that of at least three of his foes. But the disproportion in the numbers of the two contending parties was such as no strength or courage could counterpoise; and the Duke of Exeter being at length slain by a random arrow, his men threw down their arms and fled. The Earl of Gloucester and a few followers contrived to effect their escape beyond the town, in the hope of rejoining their host, which lay encamped in the fields; but they found that their army, seeing the town on fire, had dispersed and fled, believing that King Henry and his forces had arrived there and taken their leaders prisoners.

The Abbot of Westminster, at the close of this day's carnage, and after the townspeople had stopped the farther progress of the flames, walked like an exulting fiend over the piles of the dead and dying, which strewed the streets of Cirencester, and

smiled with a grin of demoniacal satisfaction as he recognized in the features of any of the slain, those of the confederates who had injured him by their threats or their suspicions. The dead bodies of the Duke of Exeter and the Earl of Somerset seemed, from the peculiar expression of his features as he gazed upon them, to be objects which gave him peculiar delight. That delight, however, seemed to be heightened to a frenzy of rapture as he approached the yet warm corse of the young Duke of Surry. "Why point ye not your sword at me now?" he said: "why use ye not that dagger which is yet clutched by your assassin hand? why call ye me not traitor, and coward, and villain? I am near enough to hear you!" As he thus spoke, he stooped down and gazed into the sightless balls, when he fancied that he saw a yet remaining ray of life in them, and he felt his hand suddenly grasped by the apparently dead man, who drew him towards him. A sudden fear, as well as the loss of strength which he had sustained even in his small share of the fatigues of the battle, deprived the Abbot of the power of motion; and Surry exerting all his remaining strength to retain his grasp of his enemy with one hand; while with the other he pointed his dagger at him, threw himself upon him, and died with

the effort which enabled him, to bury his weapon in his throat.

The Earls of Salisbury and Gloucester were soon after taken by the King's forces and beheaded ; the priest Magdalene was also apprehended, as he endeavoured to make his escape into Scotland, and was hanged at Tyburn ; and the Bishop of Carlisle, although he survived the carnage in the streets of Cirencester, soon after died in that town, more from fear than sickness. Thus did the Abbot's plot fail in effecting the ruin of King Henry, and end in the destruction of all its projectors.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

Henry the Fifth.

1413. HENRY THE FIFTH began his reign by dismissing his dissolute companions after making them liberal presents, and strictly enjoining them never to appear in his presence till they had convinced the world of their entire reformation.

Sir John Oldcastle was condemned for heresy, but he escaped from the Tower the day before the time appointed for his execution.

Henry demanded of the King of France restitution of the provinces which had been ceded to Edward III.

1415. Henry, having entered into a private treaty with the Duke of Burgundy, determined to attack France. Whilst he was embarking his troops at Southampton he was informed of a conspiracy against his person, which cost the Earls of Cambridge and Northumberland and Lord Scroop their lives. Henry landed in France, took Harfleur, gained a complete victory at Agincourt over the Constable of France, commanding an army five times as numerous as his own, with incredible loss to the enemy, and returned to England, where he was received with joyful acclamations.

1418. Henry returned to France this year, and was very successful in what he undertook, as the French factions were more intent in destroying each other than in resisting the common enemy. Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, was taken and burnt as a heretic.

1420. The factions still continued in France. The Constable Armagnac was taken and murdered by the Burgundy party.

The Dauphin and Duke of Burgundy were apparently reconciled, but soon afterwards the Duke was assassinated at a conference held on the bridge of Montereau, which so exasperated the Duke's son that he immediately entered into the strictest alliance with Henry to revenge his father's murder. Henry made very rapid conquests, and France was obliged to conclude the peace of Troye, by which it was agreed that Henry should marry the Princess Catherine, daughter of Charles VI. who was to keep the crown for his life, and on his demise Henry was to succeed to the throne of France.

Henry married the Princess, and carried her and her father to Paris, where he took on himself the title of Regent.

1421. He went to England to meet the Parliament, and left the Duke of Clarence to command against the Dauphin, and the Scots, whom the Duke of Albany, Regent of Scotland, had sent over under the command of the Earl of Buchan to assist the Dauphin.

The Duke was soon afterwards defeated and slain in an action at Beaugé, in Anjou. The Dauphin made the Earl of Buchan, Constable.

Henry carried over to France a considerable army, with which he was very successful against the Dauphin.

The Queen was delivered of a Prince named Henry.

1422. Whilst Henry was carrying on a successful war against the Dauphin he grew so ill of a fistula that he was obliged to be carried in a litter to the Bois de Vincennes, where he died on the 31st of August, leaving his brother, the Duke of Bedford, Regent of France, and his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, Protector of England, during his son's minority.

Henry was carried to England, and buried at Westminster. Charles VI. of France, did not survive him two months.

A Legend of Agincourt.

“ Like bonfires of contributory wood,
Every man's look show'd fed with either's spirit,
As one had been a mirror to another,
Like forms of life and death each took from other;
And so were life and death mix'd at their heights
That you could see no fear of death for life,
Nor love of life for death ; but in their brows
Pyrrho's opinion in great letters shone—
That *life and death in all respects are one.*”

CHAPMAN.

A Legend of Agincourt.

ON the evening of Thursday, the twenty-fourth of October, in the year 1415, the hostile armies of France and England occupied stations on the plains of St. Omer, at about three bow shots' distance from each other. Both parties were so close, that the English heard the French calling on their friends, and began to imitate their familiar vociferations; but King Henry commanded instantaneous silence to be observed, under very severe penalties. Worn down with sickness and hunger, scarcely amounting to a fifth part of the number of their opponents, and in an enemy's country, their escape from which only lay through the opposing myriads from which they were separated but by a narrow valley, the doom of the English army seemed to be fatal and certain. They lay in the midst of an immense wood, and occupied the only narrow passage which led through it. Their flanks being thus protected from the assaults of the enemy, who could only make any impression upon them by attacking them in front, moodily and silently they reposed themselves under the branches

of the trees, except the King and a few of the more distinguished leaders, who found a scarcely more enviable shelter in the miserable huts of the adjacent village of Maisoncelles. In the mean time, the autumnal rain fell in torrents; the pitchy darkness of the night was only illuminated by the numerous watch-fires which the French had kindled in their camp, to enable them to observe the motions of the English, and prevent their making their escape during the night; and the only sounds which disturbed the gloomy silence in the ranks of the latter, proceeded from the obstreperous carousals of their exulting enemies, who were already celebrating their anticipated triumphs of the morrow. The same night-wind which chilled the veins of the English, bore to their ears the insulting vociferations of their foes; and the same fires which showed them the ghastly visages and scanty ranks of their comrades, gleamed on the hilarious revels, and by their dubious and uncertain flickering even exaggerated the strength and numbers of the myriads to which they were opposed. Still was not the slightest motion of fear or regret visible in the little English band. They held a stern and indignant silence; and the feelings which the insults of their enemies called forth, were only visibly expressed when some

archer tried the strings of his bow with more than usual care and earnestness, or some man-at-arms clutched his dagger eagerly, while his features wore the aspect of one who has his deadliest foe within his grasp. Sometimes too a paternoster was uttered, but in the tone rather of an oath than a supplication; at others a less disguised execration burst from some indignant lips; and occasionally a lighter and more careless heart was indicated in the warble of a note or two of one of those gay ditties which were then so numerous and so much admired in merry England.

Such were the relative situations of the two armies, when two knights, well mounted, and preceded by a herald, were seen crossing the narrow valley which separated them. "It is little less than madness, Sir Piers Capel," said one of them, "in King Henry to send such an answer to the Constable's message as that of which we are the bearers. The enemy are five to one against us; they are healthy and robust, while we are wasted with sickness and fatigue; and they are well supplied with provisions, while we can scarcely procure sufficient to bear up against the approach of famine to-night those bodies which must fall beneath the swords of the Frenchmen to-morrow."

“ The King is wise and right,” said Capel ; “ let us die on the morrow, if Heaven so wills it, but let us not dishonour the noble enterprise which we have undertaken by submitting to terms of base compromise. There are enow in England to avenge us, should we fall ; and too many to witness our disgrace, should we return from a thriftless and dishonoured enterprise. Neither do I believe that the numbers of our enemies are so overwhelming as the fears of our scouts would make us believe. The gallant Welsh Esquire, David Gam, is out upon a reconnoitering party, and till he confirms these disheartening rumours, Laurence Dutton, I will not believe them.”

“ And in good time,” said Dutton, “ here comes the brave Welshman, in eager haste, it would seem, to bear his news to his royal countryman. What cheer, brave Gam ?” he added, as a horseman spurring his steed to its full speed approached them : “ what is the number of the enemy ?”

“ Enough to kill, enough to make prisoners, and enough to run away,” cried Gam as he spurred rapidly past them.

“ Gallant David,” said Capel, “ if on the morrow a spirit like thine will but animate each individual man in King Henry’s army, the fame of the field of

Agincourt shall not yield to that of Cressy or Poitiers, be the Frenchmen's numbers what they may. Would that I had no private sorrows to mingle with my solicitude for the public weal, and that amongst those Frenchmen who are my country's foes, I did not number one who is the destroyer of the peace, and the unfeeling trampler on the dearest affections of Piers Capel."

"Ha!" said Dutton, "does the old grudge between thee and the Lord de Challeny yet live in thy remembrance?"

"Doth it yet live there, askest thou, Sir Laurence Dutton?" returned Capel: "are not its most ancient wounds yet fresh and bleeding, and doth not every day infuse fresh torture into its rankling smarts? Doth not that false Lord still hold my affianced bride in durance, and insult me with the taunt that I have not yet proved myself worthy of her hand? The Lady Margaret, I am assured, does not forget the vows which have been exchanged between us; and so jealous is her guardian (rather let me call him her gaoler) of an attempt at escape, that he forces her to bear him company in all his expeditions, and she is even now, it is said, in his tent near the village of Agincourt."

"The morrow's battle, Capel," said his compa-

nion, "will end or cure all—but we have arrived at the Constable's tent."

Having answered the challenge of the sentinel, by saying that they were the bearers of a message from the King of England, in answer to that which he had received from the Lord High Constable of France, they were speedily admitted into the presence of the latter.

Charles D'Albret, High Constable of France, was one of the most experienced generals and gallant warriors of the age, and had in this campaign been the cause of infinite annoyance to the invading army, harassing and intercepting them, cutting off their provisions, and capturing their messengers and scouts. On the present occasion too his caution and forbearance, carried, it was thought by his followers, almost to timidity, presented a striking contrast to the reckless confidence and vain-glorious boasting of the chiefs with whom he was associated. While the latter reckoned King Henry and his troops as already in their power, and imagined (with sufficient appearance of reason, it must be confessed,) that they had nothing to do but to put the immense bodies of men which they commanded into motion, and the English would be as surely crushed as would the reptiles be on which their horses set their

hoofs, the Constable, although he was fully aware of the immense disproportion between the strength of the two armies, yet was also well acquainted with the character of Henry and his troops, and remembered, with a somewhat ominous feeling, the events of Cressy and of Poitiers. He had therefore offered terms to King Henry, which were unanimously condemned, by his military counsellors as preposterous and unnecessary concessions, but to which he adhered, as being such as the King of England, unless positively afflicted with insanity, could not possibly refuse to accept. These were, that the King and his army should be suffered to pass unobstructed into England; that the Duchy of Aquitaine and the whole of the territories which were formerly attached to it, should be ceded to Henry, and that the Princess Katherine, the daughter of the King of France, should be given to him in marriage, with a dowry of eight hundred thousand crowns.

When the two English knights entered the tent they found the Constable, the Duke of Alençon, and the Lord de Challeny there. The first was seated in a corner, anxiously perusing a map of the surrounding country, which was spread out before him. The two latter were engaged at a game of dice in the middle of the tent.

“ You have lost, my Lord,” said Alençon : “ you have lost ! I have won the King of England of you. I will, nevertheless, sell him to you at a reasonable rate. What will you give me in exchange for him ? ”

“ You shall have the Dukes of York and Suffolk, and Sir Thomas Erpingham,” returned Challeny ; “ and I care not if I throw in Sir Piers Capel also, in order to seal the bargain.”

At that moment Challeny’s eye rested on the last named knight and his companion, as they entered the tent.

“ By Heaven ! my Lords of France,” said Capel sternly, “ you seem to participate in the gamesome spirit of your Dauphin ; but rest assured, that on the morrow we will teach you a game that shall spoil your taste for dice and tennis-ball.”

“ Ha ! my fair cousin Capel,” said Challeny ; “ by St. Denis, well encountered ! It is a right long and weary period since I last met thee. These unhappy wars sever private friendships, and are by me more regretted on that account than on any other.”

Capel eyed the French lord with an indignant frown, and was approaching the Constable without taking any farther notice of him, when Challeny intercepted him. “ Fair cousin,” he said, “ this is an uncourteous interview after so long an absence.”

“ The recollections of my former acquaintance with your Lordship,” said Capel, “ may account for the fact that I am not now very solicitous to renew it. Of the man who has profaned the secret trust reposed in him by his dying friend,—who bestows on the daughter, whom that friend commended to his protection, such protection as the vulture gives to the sparrow, and has insulted and injured me in my dearest affections and feelings, I regret that I know so much, and do not wish that that knowledge should be increased.”

“ These English knights,” whispered the Duke of Alençon to the Constable, “ have proud but, I fear, marvellously empty stomachs. I could almost pity the fates of these bare-boned gallants for their stout hearts and fearless language. Should this springald fall beneath my sword on the morrow, I would grant him his liberty for a moderate ransom.”

“ Thou art too bold and sanguine, cousin Alençon,” said the Constable. These knights, albeit the agency of famine is visible in their features, do not look like men who will lightly suffer themselves to be placed in such a situation as shall render a ransom necessary.”

“ Sir Knight,” said Challeny, “ thou wrongest

me in verity. On the morrow, you may, perchance, show yourself worthy of the hand of my fair ward, should not the game which you may practise there prove lest amusing even than the Dauphin's tennis balls, and render you unable to claim the prize of your valour.

"My Lord Challeny," said Capel, "I ask no higher favour from Heaven than to meet you hand to hand, and steel to steel, on the morrow. Then, trust me, that my own injuries and those of the Lady Margaret shall not go unavenged."

"The Lady Margaret's injuries, forsooth!" exclaimed Challeny, "to whom I am anxiously performing a father's part, preventing her from throwing herself away on a thriftless springald; on one, moreover, who is now in arms against her father's king and country."

"Peace, peace! gentlemen," said the Constable: "what means this idle contention? The noble knights, doubtless, bear something from our royal adversary of England."

"Even so, my Lord High Constable," said Sir Laurence Dutton. "His Grace commends himself to your Lordship, of whose fame and valour Europe does not hold a more fervent admirer than he;—but for your proposition he rejects it with indignation

and scorn. He claims the crown and realm of France, and until these, his rightful and undoubted inheritance, are restored to him, never will he sheathe his sword."

"He shall not need to sheathe it," said the Constable, "on the morrow, when he is a prisoner in our camp, or a cold and gory carcase on the plains of Agincourt. We are sorry, brave Knights, that our proposals for peace, the large concessions contained in which were much censured by our most esteemed counsellors, have not been more favourably received by King Henry: on the morrow, therefore, we join in deadly conflict, and God defend the right!"

"Amen! amen!" responded the Englishmen, and were leaving the tent.

"But, Sir Knight," added the Constable, addressing Capel, "what is the dispute between you and the good Lord Challeney? We would not that even the grim face of war should be yet farther distorted by features of angry and personal hostility, and would willingly heal the breach between ye."

"My Lord," said Sir Piers, "the Lord de Challeney's deceased kinsman, the Lord St. Foix, left him the guardian of his fair daughter, the Lady Margaret, to whom, with that renowned Lord's consent, I

was betrothed ; and it was his dying wish, that as soon as I had acquired a name in arms great enough to wed the heiress of St. Foix, the lady should be mine."

"It is most true, my Lord," said Challeny ; "but certes that time has not yet arrived."

"My Lord," resumed Capel, "the golden spurs of knighthood have been bestowed upon me by the great King Henry of England. Show me the man in your Lordship's army who can produce a nobler evidence of merit."

"By Heaven ! my Lord Challeny," said the Constable, "the Knight speaks sooth. The lady is his, if the terms of her father's will are to be complied with."

"My Lord, my Lord," said Capel, "the Lord Challeny shall answer it with his heart's blood. The lady he keeps a close and unwilling prisoner—he bears her about with him as his bond-slave, and he has forced her even now to accompany him on this expedition."

"Ha !" said the Duke of Alençon, smiling, "by St. Denis ! 'tis the fair page whose *tête-à-tête* with the Lord Challeny in his tent we yesterday disturbed. The seeming boy, in truth, appeared to be in no gentle humour, and to look with no loving eye on his lordship."

“Doubt not that, my Lords,” said Capel, “the lady knows and esteems him according to his deserts.”

“Insolent!” exclaimed Challeny, placing his hand on his sword; “dare you to utter calumnies such as these in the presence of these princes. The Lord St. Foix, indeed, knew and esteemed thee according to thy deserts, and, to rid himself of thy importunate solicitations for his fair daughter’s hand, he promised that it should be thine; but he accompanied that promise with what he knew to be an impossible condition.”

“Name that impossible condition,” said the Knight.

“That thou shouldst prove thyself by thy prowess in the field worthy of the hand, to the possession of which thy presumption prompted thee to aspire.”

“Thou art a maligner and a liar,” exclaimed the Knight, drawing his sword. “Callest thou that an impossible condition? Draw, draw, thou foul slanderer. By Heaven! I will have thy heart’s blood ere I quit this presence.”

The Lord Challeny was not slow in accepting the challenge of his rival, and brandishing their naked weapons they rushed towards each other. The Constable, however, also unsheathed his weapon, and

darting between them, exclaimed, "Forbear ! or I will strike to the earth the first who continues this unseemly brawl. Peace, I command you, my Lord Challeny, peace ; and do you, Sir Knight, remember that you entered this tent as a peaceful messenger from your royal master. I could have indeed wished, that ere you quitted this tent I might have persuaded this gallant Lord to see the justice of your complaint."

"My Lord," said Challeny, sullenly sheathing his sword, "I must crave that this conversation be put an end to. My conduct as guardian of my deceased kinsman's child seems to me to be no fitting subject for discussion at this moment. The Knight has done his errand as a messenger from his King, and for the presumptuous addition which he has dared to make to that errand, the morrow will bring its condign punishment."

Sir Piers Capel only answered Challeny's threat with a grim smile ; and then bowing respectfully to the Constable and the Duke of Alençon, he left the tent, followed by Sir Laurence Dutton.

"My worst fears and my most sanguine hopes, Dutton," he said, as they retraced their steps across the valley, "are alike confirmed. The Lady Margaret is the prisoner of her perjured guardian, who

wishes himself to obtain her hand, but she repels his proffer with scorn, and remains constant in her attachment to me."

Dutton clearly saw the confirmation of his friend's fears, although that of his hopes was not quite so apparent to him; nevertheless he fed those hopes with words of encouragement, and pointed out to him the probability, should the English arms prove successful on the morrow, of his being able to rescue the Lady Margaret from her captivity. "But those arms," he added despondingly, "can scarcely be victorious. Our enemies are five to one against us, a disproportion which is more than doubled by their superior state of health, and the excellent manner in which their camp is provisioned."

The slight glance which his visit had enabled Sir Piers Capel to take of the hostile army, had almost made him a convert to his friend's opinion. The robust forms and joyous countenances of the French were as much contrasted to the squalid figures and emaciated features, as was their numerous array to the thin and apparently feeble ranks of their opponents. Sir Piers, however, shared the feeling which was universal in the army, of confidence in the talents and valour of the King and (strange as it may now appear) in the justice and righteous-

ness of the cause for which they were contending. Good subject and zealous patriot as he was, the knight's thoughts were nevertheless more occupied with the consideration of the practicability of effecting the escape of the Lady Margaret, than with that of achieving a victory over the French. The first event, however, depended so materially on the second, that Capel hardly knew whether it was love or patriotism by which his bosom was principally agitated."

"Dutton," he said, "I shall be engaged on the morrow near the person of the King. I would therefore advise you, who will be more at liberty to choose your own course of conduct, should an opportunity offer of attacking the tents of that part of the enemy's army which is commanded by the Duke of Alençon, to seize it. The treasure which it is rumoured is deposited there, will amply repay any effort to make yourself master of it."

"Indeed," said Dutton, laughing, "you are a most grave and disinterested counsellor, and I will take care to follow your advice. The treasure which I shall lay my hands upon will of course become my own property; and should chance lead me to the tent of the Lord Challeny, and should I there find disguised in the garb of a page——"

“ Nay, nay ! spare me ! spare me ! ” said Capel ; “ but in very earnest, should an opportunity offer, gallant Dutton, for rescuing the Lady Margaret from this unworthy lord, promise me that thou wilt pursue it as far as thy duty will permit thee.”

“ Fear not that, Sir Piers,” said Dutton, wringing his friend’s hand. “ Beauty and valour, if the old Greeks speak truth, are not unfrequently seen in conjunction, and I trust that the event of the morrow will prove propitious to them both.”

At the dawn of the next day, the French were perceived to be arranging themselves in battalions, troops, and squadrons ; and took their position in terrific numbers, directly before the English, in the field of Agincourt, across the road that must be passed in the way to Calais. They placed many companies of horse in hundreds, on each side of their vanguard, to break up the line and strength of the English archers, the van being a line of infantry all selected from the noblest and choicest in their army. The innumerable spears and shining helmets that now caught and reflected the beams of the rising sun, displayed themselves like an immense forest of light. The Constable had formed his army into three great portions. He led the van division himself, with the princes of Orleans and Bourbon, and

the chief nobility of France. 'The Count of Vendome commanded the left wing of the army, and the main body was led by the Duke of Alençon.

In the mean time King Henry, after having heard matins, and had the mass chanted in his army, stationed all the horses and baggage in the village under such small guard as he could spare, having resolved to fight the battle on foot. He formed one line of battle, placing the vanguard, commanded by the Duke of York, as a wing on the right hand, and his rear-guard, commanded by Lord Camoys, as a wing on the left. He interspersed every part with archers, and made them fix their poles before them, to prevent their line from being broken through by the enemy's horse. He so chose the ground, that the village protected his rear, and hedges and briers defended his flanks. Cased from head to foot in a suit of resplendent armour, with a large and brilliant helmet on his head, surmounted with a crown radiant with jewels, and with a tunic thrown over his shoulders adorned with the arms of France and England, he mounted a noble snow-white horse, and rode through the ranks of his small but intrepid army. The shouts with which his appearance was received were astounding, and seemed to check the ardour of the French, who, after advancing a few

paces towards the enemy, retired to their original position. The barons and knights, among whom was Sir Piers Capel, who were nearest the King's person, were also arrayed in the most splendid armour. Sir Walter Hungerford as he cast his eyes along the thin and scanty, although bold and valiant, lines of his countrymen, said in an under tone to Capel, "I would that, in addition to the small retinue which we have here, we had but one ten thousand of those archers from England who would be desirous of being with us this day!"

"Thou speakest foolishly," said the King, to whom the observation had been audible, although it had not been intended for his ear: "for by the God of Heaven! on whose grace I have relied, and in whom I have a firm hope of victory, I would not, even if I could, increase my number by one; for those whom I have are the people of God, whom he thinks me worthy to have at this time. Dost thou not believe that the Almighty, with these his humble few, is able to conquer the haughty opposition of the French, who pride themselves on their numbers and their own strength as if it might be said that whatever they willed they could achieve? and in my opinion God, of his true justice, would not bring any disaster upon one of so great con-

fidence, as fell not out to Judas Maccabeus until he became distrustful, and thence deservedly fell into ruin. We are indeed," he added in a louder tone, and addressing the gorgeously caparisoned peers and knights who stood around him, "but few compared with our enemy; but from this superiority, if God gives us the victory which we hope for, it will be from him that we shall receive it. From him then let us expect it. Should he for our sins deliver us to the swords of our foes, the less injury will happen to our country from our loss. Be brave and constant, and fight with all your strength. God and the justice of our cause will help us: he will deliver all this boasting multitude into our hands. Let every one who is this day conspicuous for his bodily armour, excel all his fellows in the superior fortitude and gallant daring of his mind."

The mixture of chivalrous and devotional feelings which this speech manifested was strongly characteristic of Henry's mind; and as he rode through the ranks, his armour, helmet, and diadem glittering in the rays of the sun, he seemed in the eyes of his soldiers to be some glorious messenger from above, and to deliver the words of prophecy from his lips. One simultaneous shout burst from the assembled army, who now indicated a feeling of im-

patience at the delay of the French in making their attack, which the English had been expecting ever since daybreak.

The sun was approaching the tenth hour; the French still seemed unwilling to commence the attack, and the King reflected that not to fight would be more ruinous to him than the worst that could happen from the conflict. He had no more provisions and no force to detach to collect them; he must perish by famine, or surrender ignominiously, unless he fought and conquered. Every one was convinced of these truths, and every one felt that, as the French would not move to attack, the English must immediately become from necessity, not choice, the assailants. The King then ordered the baggage of the army to the rear of the battle, lest it should fall into the enemy's hands; for the French plunderers had already their eyes upon it, with an intention of attacking it as soon as they saw both armies engage. The King then despatched about two hundred archers to the rear of his army under the command of Sir Laurence Dutton, with orders to post themselves in a field near the van of the French, there to remain quiet until it should be proper time to use their bows. Sir Thomas Erpingham, the marshal of the army, then riding in

the front, threw up his truncheon into the air and exclaimed, "Now strike!" which was the signal for the attack to be commenced.

Uttering repeated huzzas, and occasionally stopping to recover their breath, the English now rushed upon their enemies. The archers who were hidden in the field re-echoed these shoutings, at the same time discharging their bows, while the main army kept advancing on the French. The archers, amounting to at least thirteen thousand, let off a shower of arrows with all their might, and as high as possible, so as not to lose their effect; they were for the most part without any armour and in jackets, with their loose hose, and hatchets or swords hanging to their girdles; some, indeed, were barefooted and without hats. The princes with the King of England, were the Duke of York, his uncle, the Earls of Dorset, Oxford, Suffolk, the Earl Marshal, the Earl of Kent, the Lords Cambre, Beaumont, Willoughby, and many other powerful barons of England. When the French observed the English thus advance, they drew up each under his banner with his helmet on his head; they were at the same time admonished by the Constable, and others of the princes, to confess their sins with sincere contrition and to fight boldly against the enemy. The English

loudly sounded their trumpets as they approached, and the French stooped to prevent the arrows hitting them on the visors of their helmets. Thus the distance was now but small between the two armies, although the French had retired some paces: before, however, the general attack commenced, numbers of the French were slain and severely wounded by the English bowmen. At length the English gained on them so much, and were so close, that, excepting the front line and such of them as had shortened their lances, the enemy could not raise their hands against them. The division under Sir Cluguet de Brabant of eight hundred men-at-arms; who were intended to break through the English archers, were reduced to seven score, who vainly attempted it. Sir William de Saveuses, who had been also ordered on this service, quitted his troop, thinking they would follow him, to attack the English, but he was shot dead from off his horse. The others had their horses so severely handled by the archers, that smarting from pain they galloped on the van division, and threw it into the utmost confusion, breaking the line in many places. The horses became unmanageable, so that both they and their riders were tumbling on the ground, and the whole army was thrown into disorder and forced back on some lands that had

been just sown with corn. Others from fear of death fled; and this caused so universal a panic in the army, that many followed their example. The English took instant advantage of the disorder in the van division, and, throwing down their bows, fought bravely with swords, hatchets, mallets, and bill-hooks, slaying all before them. Thus they came to the second battalion, that had been posted in the rear of the first; and the archers closely followed King Henry and his men-at-arms. Duke Anthony of Brabant, who had just arrived in obedience to the summons of the King of France, threw himself with a small company (for, to make greater haste, he had pushed forward, leaving the main body of his own men behind,) between the wreck of the van and the second division; but he was instantly killed by the English, who kept advancing and slaying without mercy all who opposed them, and thus destroyed the main battalion as they had done the first. They were from time to time relieved by their varlets who carried off the prisoners; for the English were so intent on victory, that they never attended to making prisoners nor pursuing such as fled. The whole rear division being on horseback, witnessing the defeat of the two others, began to fly, excepting some of its principal chiefs.*

* Monstrelet.

During the heat of the combat, when the English had gained the upper hand, and taken a vast number of prisoners, news was brought to King Henry that the French were attacking his rear, and had already captured the greater part of his baggage and sumpter horses. This was indeed true, for several men-at-arms, with about six hundred peasants, had fallen upon and taken great part of the King's baggage and a number of horses; while the guard was occupied with the battle. This distressed the King very much, for he saw that though the French army had been routed they were collected on different parts of the plain in large bodies, and he was apprehensive that they would renew the battle. He therefore caused instant proclamation to be made by sound of trumpet, that every one should put his prisoners to death to prevent them from aiding the enemy should the combat be renewed. The blast of the trumpets then resounded over the plain so loud and shrill that it rose above all the noise of the battle, and even arrested the attention of all, whether combatants, pursuers, or pursued. As this sound died away a hundred stentorian voices were heard, shouting "*Slay all your prisoners!*" The work of massacre then began; shrieks and groans, and execrations, and lamentations, and prayers, arose on

every side, and formed a medley of sounds more fearful than any thing which had been heard during the very height and fury of the combat. In one place might be seen old men, women, and children, butchered in masses, who had crowded to the English tents and surrendered themselves prisoners, as soon as they saw that the event of the battle would be decisively against their own countrymen, in the hopes of thereby securing the protection of the victors. In another place, a gallant English knight, whom the fortune of war had made master of the life and fortune of a Frenchman as gallant and chivalrous as himself, was endeavouring but in vain to hurry off his unfortunate prisoner to a place of concealment and security. Others, although actuated by a less worthy motive, were making efforts of a similar nature; for they knew that the deaths of their captives would deprive them of the large sums which they expected to receive for their ransom. The commands of the King, however, were peremptory; and as the fearful words "Slay all your prisoners!" echoed and re-echoed over the plain, numerous runagates and fugitives, who had not shown themselves anxious to encounter the perils of the battle, seized with alacrity this cheap mode of acquiring the royal favour; and brandishing their as

yet unstained weapons aloft, they dyed them deeply in the blood of the unarmed and the helpless. Sometimes a French knight would make a formidable but unavailing resistance to his assassins. One even snatched the sword from the grasp of the person who aimed it at him, and stretched him lifeless on the ground; but he was immediately surrounded and overpowered by a host of fresh assailants, and fell hacked with innumerable wounds, a mangled and lifeless corpse. So rapidly was the destruction carried on, that in a very few minutes all was hushed and silent as the grave in the English tents, every soldier, even those who had just completed this work of slaughter, being engaged in a distant part of the plain in pursuit of the French, who were now fleeing in all directions.

The adventures of the persons in whose fate we would principally interest the attention of our readers, now compel us to take a retrospective glance of some of the events of this memorable day. When the Lord de Challeny on the previous evening departed from his tent in the rear of the French army, for the purpose of joining the troop which he was appointed to command, he left strict injunctions with two attendants to guard well his page, and see that he had no opportunity afforded him of effect-

ing his escape, as he much feared that he wished to join the enemy, and carry some important intelligence to the English leaders.

"If it be so," said Achmet Ali, a Moor who had long been in the service of Challeny, "if it be so," touching his dagger, and giving a ferocious grin; "methinks there were a shorter way!"

"Nay, on your life!" said Challeny, "see too it, not only that his safety, but his slightest wants are carefully attended to. Hurt but a hair upon his head, and the gibbet and your neck shall speedily become better acquainted. Guard him well, however, and you shall be liberally rewarded."

Another grin distorted the dark features of Achmet, as the Lord Challeny rode away. "Fool, fool!" he said, "he thinks his secret unsuspected, as if the dark glance and heaving breast of woman could be disguised from the eye of Achmet Ali! Fool, fool! to let thoughts of love and dalliance mingle with to-morrow's fearful business. And these lords and princes are fools who think that yonder English, now pent between the woods as the lion crouches in his lair, can be crushed as easily as the field-mouse or the mole; and those English themselves are fools who combat at the best for barren and unprofitable victory; and Achmet Ali is a

fool to waste in bitter reflections on what concerns him not the moments that might be so much better devoted to repose and slumber."

Thus saying, the Moor wrapped his cloak round him, and, stretching himself beneath a canopy at the door of the tent, soon sunk, notwithstanding the pelting of the autumnal rain, into a profound sleep. The other attendant paraded in the front of the tent, to prevent any attempt on the part of the page to escape during the slumber of Achmet Ali.

The page, who, as the reader will probably have guessed, was no other than the Lady Margaret St. Foix, passed the night in the interior of the tent, sometimes in feverish and unrefreshing slumber, and sometimes in anxious watching and wakefulness. The jealousy of her guardian had compelled her to accompany him during the campaign, and also to assume the disguise of a page. To neither of these mandates had she made as much objection as he had anticipated; for with the former, a compliance would place her nearer to Sir Pierce Capel, and with the latter it would present greater facilities for making her escape.

During the night her brain was haunted by dreams of peril and slaughter. Sometimes the whole of the morrow's fearful conflict was depicted before her,

and she saw her lover and Challeny engaged in single and mortal combat. Sometimes she beheld the former smiling cheerfully upon her, with his brow crowned with laurels and his hand clasping her neck. At others, the hated Challeny grinned fearfully upon her, showed the gory head of Sir Piers Capel in his hand, and loaded her with his odious caresses. As she started from these broken slumbers she heard only the heavy falling of the autumnal rain, and occasionally the joyous shouts of Alençon and his merry boon companions as they were borne on the air from the distant tents in which they were holding their wassails.

At the earliest dawn of day her slumbers were effectually put an end to by the sound of bugles and the mustering of the troops, but she heard nothing which indicated the speedy approach of the conflict. Occasionally the dark visage of Achmet Ali peered into the tent to see that his prisoner was safe, and the malignant glance of his eye effectually deterred her from a project which she had at one time formed of making him her confidant, and soliciting his assistance in effecting her escape. Hour toiled after hour and still the day seemed lost in laborious idleness; the battle did not begin, and the Lady Margaret feared, rather than

hoped, that the English had made good their retreat, and that thus all her expectations of rejoining her lover were annihilated. At length, however, a distant but tremendously audible shout burst upon her ear ; it was the same with which the English troops answered Sir Thomas Erpingham's exclamation of—" Now strike !" The din of the conflict soon followed. The clashing of swords, the clang of armour, the whizzing of the arrows as they flew in dense volleys through the air, the shouts alike of the assailants and the assailed, execrations, and shrieks, and groans, and cheers, gave fearful evidence that the battle was raging in all its fury. The Lady Margaret listened with intense anxiety, although she was not allowed to be the spectator of a single incident. The frail canvas which separated her from the scene of horrors was but a slender protection against its dangers, yet it was not fear, but anxious and thrilling interest, which she felt. By degrees the noise of the battle became fainter and less audible, and the scene of conflict appeared to be removed to a comparative distance from her. She therefore conjectured that the attack of the English had been repelled, and that the French in their turn had themselves become the assailants. A thousand contending emotions agitated her bosom ;

the triumph of that army in which her lover combated would be defeat and disaster to her country. A prayer for France would rise to her lips, but it was speedily converted into a petition for a blessing and prosperity to Piers Capel; while in this agonizing state of uncertainty, she would frequently sink down on her seat, overpowered by the various emotions which distracted her bosom. The din of war, which had for a short time seemed to be receding from her, now rolled back with tenfold vehemence and loudness. "Fly! fly! fly! the Constable is slain!" was shouted by a thousand voices. Fast and far did she hear the trampling of the French cavalry in eager retreat, and as they passed near enough to the tent in which she was confined, she heard their bitter lamentations on the events of the day, and their curses on their own rash folly and precipitation. At length the tumult again partially subsided, as the flight and the pursuit led to a distant part of the plain, and Achmet Ali hastily entering the tent, seized her by the hand.—"Thou art mine, thou art mine! The Lord Challeny is dead. Away with me."

"With thee! foul infidel," she exclaimed. "Whither wilt thou lead me?"

"To love and liberty—he who was alike the tyrant of us both is no more."

As he uttered these words the Moor approached the lady, and would have flung his arms around her, but she started from her seat, plucked a dagger from his girdle, and retreating a few paces exclaimed, "Advance one step and this weapon, which was never before used in so righteous a cause, shall be buried in thy heart."

The Moor grinned fearfully. "Child, art thou mad!" he exclaimed: "throw down that weapon, or thou wilt repent thy boldness."

"Never!" she replied, "until my eyes are no longer afflicted with thy odious presence."

"Say ye so?" replied the Moor, and forming with one brawny arm a shield for his breast, and extending the other, he rushed with all his strength upon the Lady Margaret. Her dagger gored his arm fearfully, but the force of his assault threw her to the ground. He then snatched the dagger from her hand, threw it to a distance, and twining his black arms around her neck, he covered her with his kisses. "Monster, avaunt!" she exclaimed; but her acclamations were wasted on the air. The Moor seized her in his vigorous arms, and bore her from the tent. The fiend-like grin upon his cheek was now mingled with the flush of passion; and the malignant scowl with which she had frequently seen

him grasp his dagger as he passed her, she would have gladly exchanged for the libidinous leer with which he now regarded her. Arrived at the exterior of the tent, he gazed a moment around him. Far as the eye could extend, one wide scene of slaughter presented itself. Piles of bleeding carcases rose like ramparts in every part of the field. Showers of fallen arrows strewed the ground. The earth was sodden with the blood of the dying and the dead, and all around in the distance were seen pursuers and pursued, scouring the field with the velocity of lightning. The Moor darted across the plain with the utmost speed. The fair but hapless burden which he bore seemed light as a feather in his grasp. Sometimes darting a timorous look behind him, at others stretching his eagle glance to the very verge of the horizon before him, and at others stooping down and imprinting a burning kiss upon the beautiful but pale and horror-stricken features of the captive, he held on his way across the field of battle. Sometimes he stumbled over one of the numerous heaps of carcases on the plain, and the lady felt her face touch the yet warm limbs of the dead. Occasionally too an arrow whizzed so near them, that its feather brushed her ear as it passed by them. Not long, however, did she retain her

consciousness. The imaginary horrors which crowded into her brain surpassed even those real and substantial ones by which she was surrounded, and she soon became in the arms of the Moor a lump almost as lifeless as those on which his foot was treading. He seemed anxious to gain the recesses of the wood which spread in the rear of the French tents. There was no one near him to prevent his executing his purpose, except a body of archers who were riding in that direction, and who he naturally conjectured had prizes of more importance in their view than two runaway domestics, a Moor and a page. As the archers approached, however, Achmet heard one say to the leaders, "They proceed from the Lord Challeny's tent, Sir Laurence—perchance it is the page of whom you are in search." The Moor, on hearing these words, doubled his speed. "Discharge your arrows at the slave," exclaimed the leader. A score of bows were instantly bent at the unfortunate Moor; not an English arrow had that day missed its aim, and Achmet Ali sunk lifeless on the ground.

Utterly deprived of sensation, although unhurt, the Lady Margaret, as the dying Moor relinquished his grasp, sunk by his side. Sir Laurence Dutton rode up to her.—"It must be she," he mentally said, "yet I will not discover her even to my brave

yeomen, lest any untoward accident should happen. Here, De Courcy, Fitz-Eustace, bear this fair lad back into the tent. Treat him as you would a prisoner of gentle rank and honour; and Adam Tyrrell, hasten to the Knight of Capel, the gallant Sir Piers, whom you will find about King Henry's person. Tell him that I have taken a prisoner whom he will be glad to see, and that he will find him in the Lord Challeny's tent." Having given these directions, the knight rode off to resume the pursuit of the flying enemy, followed by all his archers, with the exception of those three for whom he had thus devised employment:

"Hâ! am I in the custody of the English?" said the Lady Margaret, as a strangely mingled feeling of terror and satisfaction possessed her. "They are," she said in a low tone, "the ancient and inveterate enemies of my country—the people against whom my father fought so long and so gallantly; but they are the countrymen of Piers Capel, and they bear but small resemblance to him if they can offer violence to the unfortunate and the unprotected."

"Fair Sir," said De Cotréy, who did not quite understand the expression of the boy's features, but saw that some portion of fear and distrust was

mingled with it: "you shall be treated nobly and with all due attention to your safety and your wants. God has this day given the victory to the English, and they will not disgrace their successes by acts of inhumanity or oppression to those whom the fortune of war has placed in their hands."

The seeming page was once more conducted to the tent, and cordials being administered, regained consciousness and strength. "To whom am I indebted," she asked, "for effecting my deliverance from the fiend who held me in his grasp?"

"Sweet Sir," said De Courcy, a young esquire of gentle blood and well skilled in the practice of archery: "a noble Knight of England, Sir Laurence Dutton, happened to behold your distress, and arrived in time to rescue you from the ferocious Moor."

"Peace, peace! De Courcy," said Eustace, a grim old bowman who stood by his side; "we were instructed to take care of the lad, but not, that I remember, to prattle with him. Methinks too that two persons such as you and I, indifferently well skilled in the science of archery, might have had some more fitting task assigned to us than to watch over the safety of a puling boy."

"'Tis some prisoner of distinction," said De

Courcy, "and doubtless our share of the ransom-money will sufficiently requite our pains. We shall moreover be released from our charge as soon as Sir Piers Capel arrives."

"Sir Piers Capel!" exclaimed the Lady Margaret, starting from her seat and seizing the old bowman by the hand: "was not that the name?"

"Even so, my springald," returned Eustace, shaking her from him; "but, I pray thee, none of these woman's tricks for me. I care not to have my hand squeezed like a girl's, even by so hopeful a stripling as thou art."

The lady sunk on her knees, clasped her hands, and raising her eyes to heaven, seemed to be absorbed for some minutes in silent thanksgiving and prayer.

"The boy is clean mad," said Eustace: "would we were well rid of him!"

At that moment a tremendous shout resounded over the plain, and the clashing of swords and clang of armour was heard as during the height of the engagement. "By Heaven!" exclaimed Eustace, "these rascal Frenchmen are renewing the battle. Is this a time, De Courcy, to remain idle and inactive?" Thus saying, he rushed from the tent, notwithstanding the efforts of De Courcy to detain

him. Soon afterwards, that trumpet blast which we have already mentioned, sent its loud shrill notes far and wide, and was followed by the cry "*Slay all your prisoners!*" De Courcy started to his feet; his hand was on his sword, but as he gazed on the helpless boy before him, it refused to do its office. He had not much time, however, for deliberation, for Eustace burst into the tent, followed by three or four men-at-arms, with their naked weapons in their hands. "The prisoner must die!" exclaimed Fitz-Eustace, "for such is the King's commandment. The French have attacked our baggage in the rear, and the captives have been assisting them." Thus saying, he suited the action to the word, and pointed his weapon at the bosom of the Lady Margaret. "Save me! spare me!" she exclaimed, sinking on her knees before him. "I am not what I seem—" but before the reader is informed what effect the lady's supplication had upon the stern bowman, we must once more take a retrospective glance, for the purpose of watching the movements of Sir Piers Capel.

This knight had been throughout the battle near the person of the King. The latter, by reason of his gorgeous armour and the diadem upon his head, was a conspicuous object, and provoked the arrows

of the enemy's archers, and the blows of their men-at-arms. Capel had frequently interposed, and received on his own shield the strokes which were intended for the monarch, and, with a view of still farther consulting his safety, had repeatedly requested him to change his helmet and throw a cloak over his dazzling armour. The King however, heedless of danger, and anxious only to evince his personal prowess, rushed into the thickest of the fight and exposed himself as much as the meanest soldier. At one time he met hand to hand with the Duke of Alençon. The conflict was for some minutes desperate and dubious. The King received from the Duke's sword a blow on the helmet, which struck off part of his crown and made him stagger some paces backwards. Before Capel, however, could rush to the King's aid, he had returned to the charge, struck the Duke to the ground, and was lending his hand to the latter, who had surrendered himself as his prisoner, to raise him and assure him of his safety: at that instant, however, the guards, who had seen the King's danger, surrounded the Duke, and, before Henry could prevent them, put him to death. A more imminent danger still, shortly afterwards threatened the King. Eighteen French esquires, at the

head of whom was the Lord Challeny, had bound themselves by an oath to make him prisoner or die. In performance of this vow they had contrived to surround him in a part of the field and at a time when there was no one near him but the Duke of York, Sir Piers Capel, and half-a-dozen of the royal guard. A blow from the battle-axe of Challeny, which was aimed at the royal head, was intercepted by the Duke of York, who, however, only saved the King's life at the expense of his own, and sunk a bleeding corpse upon the ground. Capel, incensed alike by the death of the Prince and the sight of his own mortal enemy, rushed at Challeny, and aimed such a blow as, but for the interposition of his shield, which it shivered to pieces, would have terminated the existence of his antagonist. The other esquires, now diverted from their main enterprise by the danger of their chief, rushed upon Capel, and thus left Henry unexposed to any danger. The King, however, in his turn flew to the assistance of his faithful knight. The guards too exerted themselves manfully in his support, until at length having slain above half of their assailants, the rest fled. Capel, however, managed to intercept the retreat of the Lord Challeny ; and throwing away his shield in order to place himself

on an equality with his enemy, and drawing his sword, he exclaimed:—"Now, false traitor, die!" Challeny was not slow in unsheathing his own weapon. The conflict was short but desperate. National antipathy, personal hatred, and rivalry in love, all served to nerve the arms of the combatants. The helmets of both were knocked off; their swords shattered in their hands; they at length twined their steel-clad arms round each other's bodies, and seemed to shake the earth beneath them in their mortal conflict. Once Challeny's strength seemed failing, and he slightly relaxed his hold, when Capel, tightening his grasp as the snake does round its victim, compressed his enemy almost to suffocation, and then dashed him to the ground. His knee was immediately upon his breast—his hand darted to his girdle, and his dagger was in Challeny's throat! "So perish the oppressors of the fatherless, and the violators of their promises to the dying!" exclaimed Capel as he turned from the lifeless body of his foe. "But ah!" he added, as his eye glanced over the plain, "the victory is ours—the Frenchmen flee on every side—the Constable's banner is down—and the standards of St. George, St. Edward, and the Trinity, wave all over the plain." He was hastening to that part of the field

where the glittering crown indicated the presence of King Henry, when a bowman whom he immediately knew to belong to Sir Laurence Dutton's troop came up.

"Thrice welcome, Adam Tyrell," said Sir Piers: "how fares your gallant leader?"

"Well and victorious, Sir Knight," said the bowman, "and from him I bear a message to inform you that he has taken a prisoner whom you have long wished to see, and whom you will find in the Lord Challeny's tent.

"Now a thousand blessings on the tongue that speaks intelligence like thine, good Adam: let us hasten to the tent and name thy own reward. But ha! what noise is that?"

"By Heaven! Sir Knight," said Adam, "the French are attacking our rear. Ha! hear you not the shrieks of the boys who were left to guard the baggage?"

"Peace, peace! Adam, the royal bugle sounds."

The bugle did indeed sound, and was followed by a cry that rang more fearfully than his own death-knell in Sir Piers Capel's ear—"Slay all your prisoners!" A dreadful shriek burst from his heart, and he bounded with the velocity of the forest deer towards the French tents. He knew that of the Lord

Challeny by the banner bearing three white harts, which floated above it. He darted in, and arrived there scarcely a moment after the lady had fallen on her knees before Fitz-Eustace, to supplicate for her life; but that moment had sufficed—the bowman's sword was buried in her bosom.

Among the numerous tombs which were raised on the field of Agincourt to those who had fallen in that memorable battle, one which excited more than ordinary interest was a simple stone reared in that part of the plain on which the French tents had been planted; it was sacred to the memory of a French lady, who had fallen during the massacre of the prisoners ordered by King Henry in a moment of alarm, when a party of marauders had pillaged his baggage, and he imagined that the French army was attacking his rear,—and of her lover, an English knight, who, after a long absence from her, only arrived in time to close her eyes and die broken-hearted on her corpse. The names inscribed upon this tomb were Piers Capel and Margaret St. Foix.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

Henry the Sixth.

1422. ON the death of Henry V., his son, only nine months old, was proclaimed King of England, and heir of France; and Charles VI. dying very soon after, he was proclaimed King of France at Paris, and the Duke of Bedford made all the great men who espoused the English party swear allegiance to him.

1424. The Duke of Bedford, Regent of France at Verneuil, defeated the Dauphin's army, commanded by the Earl of Buchan, who had been made Constable of France, where he and many other Scots of note were slain.

1425. The Regent returned to England (leaving the Earl of Warwick to command) on account of violent disputes betwixt the Duke of Gloucester and the Bishop of Winchester. The Parliament interfering they were outwardly reconciled.

1426. The Duke of Bedford returned to France, and by suddenly falling on Brittany obliged the Duke to renounce the French alliance and swear allegiance to young Henry.

1429. A country girl called Joan of Arc, born in a village of Lorraine, declared that she had received express orders from God to raise the siege of Orleans, then carried on by the Regent, and to crown Charles VII. at Rheims. Being properly armed, she forced her way into Orleans with a convoy, and next day attacked and carried four of the principal posts belonging to the English, and obliged them to raise the siege, and retreat in such disorder as to lose several of their former conquests.

By Joan's advice Charles marched to Rheims, where he was crowned, and on his way he took several places, and defeated the English under the command of Lord Talbot at Patay.

Owing to this unsuccessful turn of affairs, it was determined that Henry should go to France to be crowned. Before he set out he was crowned in England, though only eight years of age.

1430. Joan of Arc was taken prisoner in a sally at Compiègne, and delivered to the Regent, and in 1431 tried and burnt as a witch, in Rouen.

1431. The English affairs in France were much on the decline, and were made still worse by the death of the Duke of Bedford, at Rouen.

The Duke of York was appointed Regent, but on his going to France he found Paris in the hands of the enemy, and the English affairs went gradually to decay.

1444. A truce was concluded with France for two years, and Henry was married to Margaret of Anjou, daughter of René, titular king of Sicily.

1447. The Duke of Gloucester was thrown into prison, and afterwards found dead in his bed.

1450. The English were driven out of every part of France, except Calais; and Charles, employed about the regulation of his government, did not molest England, though there was no truce.

The people, much discontented with the Queen and her cabal, began to talk of the Duke of York's right to the crown; which at last ended in a serious rebellion in Kent, headed by a man of the name of Jack Cade, who called himself Mortimer, and induced great numbers to join his standard.

The King was taken to Kenilworth Castle, and the rebellion at last quelled, and Cade killed.

1452. The Duke of York returned from Ireland and began to aspire to the crown. In concert with the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, he raised troops on a pretence of removing the Duke of Somerset and others from the ministry, and reforming the government.

1453. The Queen was delivered of a Prince, who was named Edward. Her party finding that they could not at present cope with York, Somerset was sent to the Tower; and the King being seized with a fit of sickness, York was made Protector of the kingdom. Next year the King getting a little better, released Somerset from the Tower, and committed the government to him, on which the Duke of York flew to arms and defeated the royalists at St. Albans, where the Duke of Somerset was slain. The King fell into Richard's hands, who treated him with great respect, and went with him to London. At a Parliament, Richard was declared Protector till the Prince of Wales should be of age.

1458. An outward reconciliation took place between the heads of the two factions; but fresh commotions soon broke out with redoubled violence, and each party endeavoured to raise men in every county in England.

1459. The Earl of Salisbury marching a body of troops to join Richard at Ludlow, in Shropshire, was attacked on the 23d of September at Blore Heath by Lord Audley, who was defeated and slain.

The royalists, advancing towards the Duke of York, proclaimed a general pardon; on which most of the Duke's army deserted him, and the leaders were obliged to fly to Ireland and Calais.

1460. The Earls of Salisbury and Warwick having landed in Kent with troops, and being joined there by Edward, Earl of March, Richard's son, and other friends, (Richard remaining in Ireland,) they encountered the royalists at Northamp-

ton and totally defeated them. The King was taken prisoner and conducted to London.

A Parliament was assembled, at which Richard Duke of York, being returned from Ireland, pleaded his prior right to the crown, as being descended by his mother from the Duke of Clarence, Edward the Third's second son, whereas Henry was descended from the third son, and then left the assembly to deliberate on his claim. It was at last settled, with the Duke's approbation, that Henry should keep the crown during his life, and that Richard should succeed him.

Richard being informed that Margaret (who had fled into Wales, and then into Scotland with the Prince of Wales after the battle of Northampton) had raised troops in the north, set out with a small army to meet her, but was defeated and slain near Wakefield.

1461. Edward the Duke's son, determined on carrying on the quarrel, (the two parties were distinguished by the Yorkists wearing white roses and the Lancastrians red ones,) marched from Wales towards London, and on the way defeated the Earl of Pembroke at Mortimer's Cross, in Herefordshire. The Queen revenged this disaster (being likewise on her march to London) by defeating the Earl of Warwick at St. Albans, and releasing the King. Edward being joined by the remains of Warwick's army, which was superior to the Queen's, proceeded to London, the inhabitants of which were his friends, whilst she retreated to the north.

Edward's friends, declaring that Henry had forfeited his right to the crown by breaking his agreement, proclaimed Edward, March the 5th, by the name of Edward IV.

Katherine, Henry the Fifth's widow, married a Welsh gentleman named Owen Tudor, by whom she had two sons, Edward, Earl of Richmond, and Jasper, Earl of Pembroke.

The Witch of Eye.

“ His picture made in wax, and gently molten
By a blue fire, kindled with dead men’s eyes,
Will waste him by degrees.”

MIDDLETON.

The Witch of Eye.

“ FEAR me not, fear me not, good Sir John ; the stout heart of Eleanor Cobham will not fail her, albeit that as yet I do not choose to be present at these orgies. How, sayest thou Margaret Jourdain is there, and assisted by Roger Bolingbroke ? ”

The person by whom this question was asked was a female, who, although somewhat declined into the vale of years, was still remarkable for her stately and majestic gait, and the symmetry and beauty of her features. Her stature seemed to be above six feet ; her long flowing and once jet black, but now grey tresses, fell in rich ringlets down her back, and her high pale forehead was singularly contrasted with her dark and fiery eye. Her rank and wealth were sufficiently indicated by the splendour of her dress. She wore a long flowing robe of silk ; her hair was plaited with jewels, whence pendant drops, composed of precious stones of great value and size, hung upon her forehead ; and a collar of gold, from which hung a chain of the same costly material,

was fastened round her neck. She sat in a massive oaken chair, curiously and elaborately carved, and placed in the midst of a large Gothic chamber, through whose windows the moon-beams poured a flood of many-coloured light, as they took the tinge of the painted glass through which they streamed. The walls of the apartment were hung with rich tapestry, and the floor was strewn with rushes. A large silver candelabra, bearing lighted waxen tapers, descended from the ceiling and illuminated the whole apartment. A small table, of similar material and workmanship to the chair in which she sat, stood before the lady, and on it was spread, wide open, a large parchment volume, in the perusal of which she appeared to have been very recently occupied. Opposite to her stood a man whose shaven crown, the beads and cross dependant from his neck, his white cassock and narrow scapulary, proclaimed him to be a monk of the Cistercian order. He was a short and meagre figure, with small red eyes, a sharp aquiline nose, black beard and brows, and an extraordinarily intelligent, but at the same time somewhat repulsive and malignant, expression of countenance.

“They have been busily engaged, madam,” he said, in answer to the lady’s question, “in your

Grace's service since the hour of noon. At that hour the waxen image was completed, and the fatal fire was lighted; and from that hour did Henry, marrow and bones and all, begin to waste and wither away, and shall continue so to do until the throne of England shall be left vacant for a worthier occupant."

"Thanks, good Sir John," said the lady, unclasping the collar of gold round her neck, and placing it, with the chain attached to it, in the priest's hands; "a thousand thanks. Do I not well, Sir John? Heaven knows that it is not for the sake of gratifying any ambitious thoughts of my own, that I enter upon this seemingly unhallowed work, but in compassion of the miseries which the unhappy people of England endure under the sway of the feeble and incapable Henry, who is the unresisting instrument of all their ills, in the hands of that she-wolf of France, and this newly-created Duke of York, Richard Plantagenet."

"Dost thou not well, madam, saidst thou?" echoed the obsequious priest. "Your Grace is but to blame for having so long delayed to avail yourself of that knowledge and those arts, into the mysteries of which your poor servant has been the unworthy means of initiating you, for the purpose of putting

an end to the evils with which our country is overwhelmed. How will the loyal heart of your servant Hume rejoice when he hears the welcome shouts of 'God save King' Humphrey!' 'God save Queen Eleanor!'"

"'Peace! peace! good Hume,'" said the lady; "thou talkest idly." But a smile of hope brightened her features at the same time, and belied the expression of her lips. "Heaven knows that there is no one in his realm would pray more fervently for the welfare of Henry of Lancaster than Eleanor Cobham; but, that while he lives, England must lie at the mercy of Margaret of Anjou and Richard Plantagenet. Yet, Hume, I would fain receive some more certain assurance as to my future destiny. When wilt thou invoke to my presence the spirit who is to answer such questions as I shall propound?"

"Madam," answered Hume, "it is by severe and painful penance, anxious watching, and long fasting alone, that I can prevail upon that invisible power, whom I serve, to gratify your Grace's desire. Neither can Margaret Jourdain nor Roger Bolinbroke assist me, for they have not attained such proficiency in the occult sciences, as to be able to command spirits to do their bidding. Time, a short but

carefully spent time, will empower me to call one before you who shall reveal to your Grace the secrets of futurity."

Had the Duchess at that moment fixed her eye upon her chaplain, she would have detected, in his changing colour and trembling limbs, the hypocrite and the impostor. Whatever might have been the reality of the pretensions to occult lore on the part of Jourdain and Bolingbroke, the only magic of which Hume was master, was the ascendancy of a strong mind over a weak one. The Duchess knew him to be a man of vast and various learning and acquirements, and had been initiated by him into the study of languages and of the natural sciences. She therefore readily credited his pretensions to knowledge of a more profound and mysterious character; and he, by flattering her ambitious hopes, and pretending to minister to their gratification, contrived to store his own purse at her expense, and to indulge himself in such pleasures as his straitened means, and not his sacerdotal oath, alone debarred him from. He had accordingly promised to raise a spirit who should reveal her future destiny to her, and had hired two professors of the black art to construct a waxen image of the King, who they pretended would waste away under the influence of a

strange disease, as that image melted before a fire which they had kindled. Hume knew his own pretensions to occult knowledge to be unfounded, and believed those of his associates to be the same. The death of the King, and the elevation of Dame Eleanor, were not the objects which the crafty priest had in view, but the multiplication of his own wealth and pleasures, by means of the well-stored purse of the Duchess of Gloucester.

“Hume!” said the Lady, “hasten the period at which my desires may be gratified. In the mean time, receive my thanks for the services which thou hast already rendered me. But give us leave awhile, good Sir John; my Lord approaches.”

The priest made a lowly reverence, and left the apartment almost at the same moment, that the Duke of Gloucester entered. This was Humphrey, the son of King Henry the Fifth, who had been left by that heroic monarch the protector of the realm during the minority of the infant King, and who by his virtues, and the mild and equitable exercise of his authority, had acquired the appellation “the good Duke Humphrey.” He entered with a hurried and agitated step; his face was pale, his lip quivered, and his eye rolled wildly and fearfully.

“My gracious Lord,” said the Duchess, “what

has happened ? I fear some strange and unlooked-for misfortune."

"Eleanor," said the Duke, "the young King is taken suddenly and dangerously ill. His physicians can neither divine the nature of his malady nor devise any cure."

"Ha !" said the Duchess, her eyes sparkling, and her cheek glowing as she spake—"Suddenly, Duke Humphrey, sayest thou that the King was thus attacked ? and at what hour, I pray thee ?"

"At the hour of noon," answered the Duke.

"At noon—at noon," repeated the Duchess to herself, clasping her hands and pacing the apartment, in a state of mental abstraction. "It was at that hour, as Hume informed me, that the wise woman's labours were completed. Humphrey," she added, turning towards the Duke—"the King will die."

"Now Heaven forfend !" replied Duke Humphrey ; "so young—so good—so pious."

"The fitter, Humphrey, for Heaven !" interrupted the Duchess. "For this world, and especially for the station in it which he fills, he is of all men the most incompetent. The monk's cloister or the hermit's cell, indeed, might have found in him a fitting occupant, but the throne of France and

England suits him not; and the sceptre of Henry the fifth is not adapted to his puny grasp."

"Alas! alas!" said the Duke of Gloucester, "he will neither fill the one nor grasp the other long."

"The will of Heaven must be submitted to," said Eleanor; "and the people of England, when they are obliged to exchange King Henry for King Humphrey, must learn to yield in patience to so fearful a visitation."

"Now by Heaven! Nell," said the Duke, and an expression of indignation and anger succeeded that of deep distress which had clouded his fine features; "thou maddest me. Is ours an age at which to nurse the idle dreams of ambition? and is the malady of a young and virtuous prince like Henry, a fitting subject of exultation to his nearest relatives? I fear, Eleanor, that pride and ambition have dried up the milk of human charity in thy bosom. I fear, too," here he spoke in a low and stifled tone, while cold big drops stood upon his temples; "that thou pursuest unholy and unlawful studies. Beware, Eleanor Cobham, beware! the public suspicion is awakened against thee, the Queen loves thee not, the Duke of York thirsts for thy blood, and Humphrey of Gloucester's power to defend and protect thee is becoming smaller and weaker with every waning moon."

The consciousness of her guilt, and the abruptness and suddenness of the accusation, struck the Duchess of Gloucester mute, while her cheek changed from a fiery red to an ashy paleness, her breath came short and thick, and her limbs trembled under her. "Humphrey," she at length said, as with a violent effort she recovered her self-possession, drew her stately figure up to its utmost height, and laid her hand upon the arm of the Duke; "this is cruel and unkind, and, from thee, most unexpected. Because I have devoted myself to study, the ignorant vulgar have charged me with the practice of magic; and the malignity of those of my foes, whose superior education and station prevent them from being themselves the dupe of so idle an accusation, has nevertheless given sanction and confirmation to it; but that the Duke of Gloucester, the most accomplished and learned prince in Christendom, in whose well-stored library I have acquired that knowledge which is now imputed to me as a crime, that he should join in the senseless outcry of the vulgar and the malignant, is a calamity against the occurrence of which I confess that I was not sufficiently prepared. Go, Duke Humphrey, denounce me to the King; offer up your wife as an expiatory sacrifice to the wrath of Margaret of Anjou and Richard Plantagenet. Suffolk will smile upon you

—your good uncle Beaufort will once more admit you to his paternal embrace, and rare and jocund will be the dance and the wassailing over the grave of Eleanor Cobham.”

Thus saying, she rushed out of the apartment, leaving the Duke, over whose feelings she well knew the extent of her influence, penetrated with uneasiness and sorrow at having given her pain or offence, although he could not entirely banish from his mind the suspicions which had been awakened in it.

To the wonder and joy of the Duchess, and the consternation of Hume, day after day brought news to the Duke of Gloucester's palace of the increasing malady of the King, and of the inutility of every effort which had been made to stop its fatal progress. The chaplain, who had believed that the associates whom he had engaged to assist him in his attack on the Duchess's purse were no more able to effect the King's death by magic than he was to raise a spirit, began to fear that their diabolical learning was no vain pretension, so strangely coincident was the progress of the King's disease with the work on which the Witch of Eye and Bolingbroke were engaged. Dissolute and avaricious as he was, his heart sunk within him at the idea of being an accomplice in the murder of his sovereign, especially

by such means. Remorse for his crime was also mingled with no small portion of fear as to its consequences to himself; for it was by no means certain that amidst the contentions of parties, which would necessarily follow the death of the King, his patroness would rule the ascendant. To add to his perplexity, Eleanor had become importunate with him to raise the spirit who, he had promised, should reveal to her her future destiny; and on his repeated excuses and postponements, had rated him in terms which his wounded pride could ill brook. Moodily and dejectedly pondering over these circumstances, Hume was pacing the great hall of the Ducal palace. He had just received an intimation from Bolingbroke that their work was proceeding most auspiciously; that in less than twelve hours the waxen image would entirely melt away; and that within that time, therefore, King Henry must sink under the influence of his disease.

“Save me, save me! gracious Heaven!” he exclaimed; “wherefore have I sold myself, body and soul, to this diabolical confederacy? I will break the hellish trammels in which I am bound; I will hasten to the Duke of York, reveal all, and, while there is yet time, save the King from the machinations of his enemies. And yet,” he added, after a

short pause, "this is but an idle fear, by which I am suffering myself to be unmanned. Strange as it is that the King's illness should happen at the same time that these idle mummeries are practising, it does not therefore follow that it is caused by them; neither do I yet know that any symptoms have to-day appeared to render the near approach of death probable."

At that moment the Duke of Gloucester, with several attendants, passed through the hall. As he passed Hume, the priest made a lowly reverence. "To your prayers, to your prayers, good Sir John; pray for our pious King whose mortal career is fast drawing to its close."

"I trust," said Hume, crossing himself, "that His Highness will yet live many years to rule over a happy and loyal people."

"That hope is vain, Hume," said the Duke; "I have just received a message from Queen Margaret, commanding my immediate attendance, and informing me that the King has not twelve hours' life in him. Fare thee well, reverend father! and forget not to pray for good King Henry's soul."

Hume gazed on the Duke without answering him, astounded and dismayed. "Twelve hours!" he exclaimed, after Humphrey and his followers had

disappeared ; “ it is the very period which Bolingbroke mentioned as that at which his hellish purpose would be achieved. I will wash my hands of this unhallowed deed. The Duke of York shall know the fiend-like purpose of the Duchess. Yet would I not willingly lead to destruction the woman to whom I owe my rank and fortune—I would not lead to the scaffold or the stake—”

At that moment he felt his arm wrung forcibly, and turning round, beheld the very person who principally occupied his thoughts, standing before him. There was an unusual flush on the cheek of the Duchess ; her eye seemed to dash fire and her stately form appeared to dilate, to still more majestic proportions. She looked as though she already grasped the sceptre of France and England, and wore the regal diadem upon her brow.

“ So moody and contemplative, Sir John Hume,” she said ; “ and at the hour when all our labours are about to be crowned with success.”

“ I understand your Grace’s meaning,” said the priest ; “ the King is dying.”

“ Even so,” said the Duchess, “ thanks to thy powerful arts.”

Hume shuddered, and lifting his sleeve to his brow, wiped away the drops which had started

there. "Gracious Madam, say not so!" he exclaimed, "I trust that his Highness will yet—will at least for a time;—pardon me, pardon me! I know not what I say; yet were it not well that these proceedings should be stayed for a time? The King's disorder may be natural, and then——"

"Peace, peace!" said Eleanor; "thou talkest childishly. It was the will of fate that Margaret of Anjou's crown should be transferred to these brows of mine. But, Hume," she added in a determined and somewhat angry tone, "I must see and converse with this spirit immediately. I will not be delayed longer; and if thy art cannot raise him, I must seek the aid of others who are greater proficients."

"Not yet, gracious Madam, not yet," said Hume; "and, I pray thee, again consider whether we are not somewhat too sudden in our machinations for the death of the King. Command the Witch of Eye and Bolingbroke to suspend their operations for the present. If the King's illness is so speedily followed by death, the public will suspect——"

"Peace, man!" said the Duchess, whose haughty and imperious temper for a moment got the better of her discretion; and smiting the priest violently on his cheek—"peace, doting prattler! counsel me

not, but obey me.—Raise me the spirit, or by Heaven——”

At that moment the Duchess's eye caught the expression of Hume's features, and she was startled and awed at the mingled malignity, contempt, and triumph which she read there. Eleanor Cobham, although noted for the violence and impetuosity of her passions, was equally remarkable for the swiftness and adroitness with which she could master and disguise them. In an instant the flush of anger passed from her face, her lip curled with a smile, and her whole countenance seemed lighted up with gaiety and merriment.

“Why, Hume, man,” she said, “thou lookest as if thou believedst us to be really offended, and forgetful of the services which our good chaplain has performed on our behalf. But in truth, Sir John, I must converse with this spirit. Gratify the wish of thy Duchess——”

“Of my Queen,” said Hume, sinking on his knee, and taking the opportunity of his prostration to mask his features in an expression of becoming reverence and humility.

“Whether Duchess or Queen,” said the Lady, “the reward bestowed by Eleanor Cobham on those who obey her will shall be princely.”

"Your Grace's will," said Hume, "is your lowly servant's law. This night, if it so please ye, your wish shall be gratified."

"Ha!" said the Duchess, "at what hour?"

"At the hour of eleven, which is just one hour before the charm which is to work King Henry's death will be complete, will I conduct you to my apartment, where the Witch of Ey and Boling' are busily at work. There ye shall see and hear the spirit which will reveal to you your future destiny."

"I will not fail thee, good Sir John," said Eleanor, thrusting a purse into his hand. "At the hour of eleven thou shalt find me ready to accompany thee."

Thus saying, and waving her hand to the priest, she hurried from his presence.

"And at the hour of eleven, proud Eleanor Cobham," said Hume, following her slowly with his eye till she disappeared from the hall; "I will raise thee such a spirit as thou wouldst give the wealth of England to lay. There needed but this," he added, while his features assumed an expression of demoniacal ferocity—"there needed but this dishonest blow to wind my spirit to its purpose." He paused a moment, but in that moment his flashing eye, his changing brow, and his heaving breast

seemed to indicate thoughts sufficient to occupy his mind for a century. At length, wrapping his cloak closely round him, drawing his cowl over his brow and exclaiming "I have it! I have it!" he rushed out of the hall.

This conversation took place at about the hour of noon, and the bell had just tolled the eleventh hour, when the Duchess of Gloucester leaning on the arm of Home, entered the chamber in which her emissaries were performing or pretending to perform their wicked ceremonies. It was a large and spacious apartment which the Duke of Gloucester had specially appropriated to the use of the chaplain, in which was held sacred from the intrusion of every other person. Here, therefore, Home had an opportunity of pursuing without interruption or discovery, his studies in those occult sciences to which he had devoted himself, but which were so uncongenial to his sacred office. The Duchess started as she entered, for the pale lurid flame by which alone the chamber was illuminated, cast a fearful and preternatural light over every object on which it glanced. Eleanor Cobham, however, soon suppressed the feeling of fear by which she had at first been overpowered, and advanced into the apartment. The fire from which this

ghastly and melancholy light proceeded, glowed on the hearth at the eastern end of the room. Over it cowered two figures, whose squalid dresses, misshapen forms, and wan and emaciated features, were in fearful unison with the whole scene. One was a woman, bent nearly double with age and infirmity; a very few tufts or patches of white hair were upon her head; but the scantiness of hair there, was compensated by the profusion with which it grew above her lip and on her chin. Her cheek was sunken and hollow, her lips dry and withered, and as they moved up and down, while she seemed to be mumbling some diabolical prayer or incantation, they showed that the hag could not boast of the possession of a single tooth. Her right hand rested on a stick, while her left was elevated, and moved to and fro in accompaniment to the spell which she was muttering. Her companion was a lean and shrivelled old man, whose grey beard swept his breast, and who with a large volume in his hand, which he was attentively perusing, knelt by the fire, and seemed to be examining by his book the accuracy of the lesson which the old woman was repeating.

The Duchess, bold of heart as she was, could not help shuddering, and clasped more firmly the arm of Hume as she gazed upon these two fearful be-

ings, especially as she perceived, that although they stood in the full blaze of the fire, their figures cast no shadow on the floor of the apartment. But an object of still more intense interest to her soon diverted her gaze another way. At the opposite end of the apartment stood a large waxen image, which needed not the crown upon its head, or the sceptre in its hand, to tell her that it was intended to represent King Henry, so perfect and faithful a portraiture did it present of that monarch. For nearly a month had this image been stationed opposite the fire which we have described, and which had been kept incessantly burning night and day. During that time the figure had melted and wasted beneath the influence of the heat, and it now presented the appearance of a man emaciated by illness and fast sinking into the grave. The Duchess, who had on the previous day seen the King, gave a smile of grim delight, as she fancied she saw the evidence of the success of her magical practices before her. The most intense silence reigned in the apartment, interrupted only by the low faint mumbling of the hag, and the crackling of the faggots in the blaze. The Duchess, however, soon broke this portentous silence, by advancing towards the fire, and saying to the unearthly-looking beings who stood beside it—

“Rare artists! accept the thanks of Eleanor Cobham, and doubt not, as soon as the work is accomplished, that your recompense shall be far more substantial.”

The people whom she addressed, were Margaret Jourdain, or Jourdain, who was better known by the denomination of the Witch of Eye, from the place of her birth, and Roger Bolingbroke, who was, like Hume, a priest, but had devoted his learning and talents to the study of astrology and sorcery. These persons had long been employed by Hume, and paid him the utmost respect and deference, not only on account of the liberal gifts by which he repaid their services, but because they believed him to be a greater proficient in the arts of magic than themselves, and to be able even to raise spirits—a degree of proficiency in those diabolical sciences to which they did not pretend. They answered the address of the Duchess, by directing their eyes slowly towards her, making the sign of the cross, not upon their foreheads, but their backs, and then sinking upon their knees before her, and exclaiming, “God save Queen Eleanor!”

“Thanks, gentle friends, thanks for your unshaken loyalty and unremitting services,” said the Duchess; “but tell me, I pray ye, when the work shall be accomplished?”

“ When the bell,” said the witch, in a discordant tone, or rather shriek, “ shall have tolled the midnight hour.”

At that moment the bell of the Ducal palace drowned all other sounds, by tolling heavily and solemnly the first quarter after the hour of eleven.

“ Ha ! sayest thou so ?” said the Duchess, and as the lurid blaze brightened her features, it showed them still more brightened by the hope of approaching grandeur and sovereignty.

“ Even so,” said the hag ; “ then will yonder image sink to the ground, destroyed and dissolved in that flame ; and then will the spirit of Henry of Windsor melt beneath the influence of his disease, dissolve, and mingle with the elements.”

“ Then look to it, Margaret of Anjou ; look to it, Richard Plantagenet,” said the Duchess ; “ for Eleanor Cobham has been injured and will be avenged ; but still I am troubled ; doubt and uncertainty yet hang over my future fate. Henry may cease to be King, and yet Eleanor not become Queen. These signs and symbols may be delusions. Hume, I claim the performance of thy promise. Call up a spirit who shall make answer to such questions as I shall propound.”

“ Your Grace,” said Hume, “ shall be obeyed ; “ yet pardon me, but I fear your courage may fail.”

“Nay, nay, dotard!” said the Duchess impatiently: “I mean,” she added, eager to retract the offensive epithet, “my good Sir John—fear not my courage; I have gone thus far, and do not now mean to recede.”

The chaplain then bowed reverentially, and, drawing a white wand from beneath his cloak, advanced into the midst of the apartment. With this wand he described a circle on the floor, which he perambulated three times, pouring from a phial which he held in his hand a blood-red liquor, and chanting in a low and solemn tone something which appeared to be a metrical composition, but was in a language unintelligible to the Duchess. He then threw himself on the floor, and remained in a posture apparently of adoration, and groaning bitterly, for several minutes; then starting up he rushed towards the fire, seized the volume which Bolingbroke held in his hand, and returning to the circle began to read loudly and rapidly from it, but still in a language which the Duchess did not understand. At length, he closed the volume, bowed reverently three times, and retreated backwards out of the circle. At that moment the bell tolled the second quarter after eleven. A noise like the sound of distant thunder was heard; the floor of the apartment opened, and a figure, which could not be distinctly

seen, but appeared to be tall and wrapped in a black mantle, stood before them.

A shriek burst from the lips of the Duchess, and even from those of Bolingbroke and the witch. "For the love of Heaven! be silent," said Hume in a whisper to the former. "Waste not these precious moments in idle alarms. Demand what ye will of the spirit, but be courageous and be brief."

"Tell me," said Eleanor, advancing towards the circle, but trembling in every limb—"tell me what fate awaits King Henry?"

She gazed with dim but anxiously straining eyes on the unearthly being whom she interrogated, as in a sullen feeble voice the spirit answered:—

"When yonder image melts in yonder blaze,
Henry shall number out his mortal days."

"Why that is well!" exclaimed the Duchess, forgetting her alarm in the confirmation which this prediction gave to her wildest hopes. "But Henry," she added, "is not the only person whose existence gives me uneasiness. Tell me, too, what fate awaits the Duke of York?"

The spirit answered in the same tone:—

"Plantagenet from earth shall fly
Swiftly and speedily as I."

"Why that," said Eleanor, "is better tidings still : thou wilt vanish in an instant when my bidding is performed. And shall the residence of Plantagenet on this earth be no more permanent than thy own? Happy, happy, Eleanor!"

"For Heaven's sake! Madam," said Hume, gazing anxiously on a dial on which the rays of the fire at that moment fell, telling him that the midnight hour was fast approaching. "This is idle and inauspicious delay. Would you demand aught farther of the spirit?"

"One, one more question," she exclaimed. "Tell me," she said—and then hesitating for a moment seemed anxious yet fearful to put the question,— "Tell me my own future fate—the fate of Eleanor Cobham?"

"The answer was not given to this question so speedily as before; but when it was pronounced it was in a peculiarly emphatic and impressive tone.

"The secrets of thy future fate
Let my attending spirits state;
Tell the Dame of Gloucester's doom,
Come, attending spirits, come!"

The spirit, as he finished his prediction, was seen to apply something to his lips, and presently afterwards no unearthly and aerial sound was heard to proceed from them but the loud and distinct blast of

a bugle. A responsive shout was heard to follow it, and then the doors of the apartment were burst open, and a band of soldiers, carrying drawn swords and lighted torches in their hands, rushed in. The pretended spirit advanced towards them, and throwing away the black mantle in which his form and face had been enveloped, discovered to the terrified and astonished Duchess the features of the Duke of York.

“The fire! the fire!” said Hume, darting a look of agony at the dial.

“Ha! I did indeed forget,” said the Duke of Buckingham, who was the leader of the soldiers. “Fellows, extinguish that accursed light.”

The soldiers immediately advanced to the fire, and trampling upon the now faint and decaying embers, speedily succeeded in extinguishing it. The last spark, however, had scarcely been trodden out before the bell tolled the hour of midnight.

“Heaven be praised!” said Hume; “the accursed deed has been prevented. Had yonder spark retained a gleam of light for an instant longer, the spirit of good King Henry had passed away for ever.”

“Peace, double traitor!” said the Duke of York, “good King Henry is doubtless indebted to thee for his life; but he has to thank not thy loyalty but

thy malignity and avarice. Both however shall be gratified, agreeably to the promise which I made thee. „The woman, Duchess though she be, who insulted thee, shall be brought to a terrible expiation of her crimes, and the reward which she promised thee for aiding and concealing her damnable practices shall be more than doubled for having revealed them.”

Eleanor gazed in sullen silence on the scene which had terminated all her hopes and probably her life. She saw herself too completely in the hands of her enemies for any effort at resistance or escape to be availing, and was too proud to expose the bitterness and humiliation of her feelings by tears or idle upbraidings. One scornful and malignant smile, which she glanced at Hume, was the only expression of her sentiments in which she indulged, and then she left the apartment with her arms fettered to those of Bolingbroke and the Witch of Eye, in the custody of Buckingham and the soldiers.

The events which followed are too well known to require more than a brief recapitulation. The Duchess of Gloucester, Hume, the Witch of Eye, and Bolingbroke, were tried and condemned for the crimes of conspiring the death of the King, and

practising the arts of magic and witchcraft. The witch was burned in Smithfield, Bolingbroke was hanged at Tyburn, and the Duchess sentenced to do open penance in four public places within the city of London, and afterwards to imprisonment for life in the Isle of Man. Hume was not only pardoned, but liberally rewarded. This man did not appear really to have possessed any knowledge of the occult sciences, but to have imposed on the credulity of the Duchess. That Margaret Jourdain and Roger Bolingbroke were really magicians and wizards, was religiously believed by all; and the fact that the King, at the very moment that the magical fire was extinguished in the house of the Duke of Gloucester, recovered his full and perfect health at his palace at Westminster, gave support and confirmation to such a belief, however irrational it may now appear.

The Duke of Gloucester, whatever might be his feelings at the disgrace and punishment of his Duchess, did not attempt any exercise of his authority for their prevention, but, to use the language of an old chronicler,* “toke all these thynges patiently and saied litle.”

* Hall.

The Prophecy:

Suffolk. Drones suck not eagles' blood, but rob bee-hives ;
It is impossible that I should lie
By such a lowly vassal as thyself ;
Thy words move rage and not remorse in me.
I go of message from the Queen to France,
I charge thee waft me safely cross the Channel.
Second Part of HENRY VI.

The Prophecy.

THE Prophecy was spoken on a morning of May, in the year 1540. The day was gloomy, and the dull grey light which streamed through the window of a little square apartment in the Tower of London, only served to make the place of confinement, on which it shone, more irksome to its inhabitant, by rendering visible its narrow dimensions, the grating through which this melancholy light peered upon it, and the massive iron door which divided the captive from the world. A stone table, on which were placed some writing materials, and a large oaken chair, formed the only furniture of this desolate chamber. The grey hairs and furrowed features of the prisoner seemed to indicate a man who had passed the period of middle life. Suffering or age, or perhaps both, appeared to have worn down and depressed, but not humiliated him. Pride and haughtiness flashed forth even in the melancholy glance of his eye, and every sigh which burst from his heart was followed by a firmer step, as he paced across his dungeon, as if like Cassius "he scorned his spirit

that could be moved to *sigh* at any thing." He wore even in his dungeon a richly embroidered robe, lined with velvet, and the George and Garter were tied round his leg, on which gorgeous but unprotecting symbols of his rank he seemed to gaze with a sort of gloomy satisfaction.

"And as these robes and this garter," he said, "are wrapped round the person of William de la Pole even in his dungeon, so is his spirit clothed even in the hour of his captivity with high and undaunted resolution, with unshaken allegiance to his sovereign, and with hatred and scorn as unshaken for those false friends and treacherous foes to whom he is indebted for his lodging in the Tower."

William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, had long enjoyed the highest place in the favour of King Henry the Sixth, and of his Queen, Margaret of Anjou, of the union between whom he had been the main instrument. In proportion, however, as he enjoyed the favour of the sovereign, was he detested by the nobles and the populace. The blackest crimes were laid to his charge ; he was accused of a guilty intercourse with the Queen ; of treason, in having sold the provinces of Anjou and Maine to the French ; and of having been an accomplice in the murder of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. Of

the truth of these accusations it is difficult to judge at this distance from the period to which they refer; certainly nothing like evidence sufficient to support them has come down to our times. The public voice, however, was expressed so loudly against the Duke of Suffolk, that the King and Queen were constrained, however reluctantly, to obey it, and to commit the Duke a prisoner to the Tower.

The Duke of Suffolk had found himself ill at ease during his confinement. He knew the power and malignity of his enemies, the weakness and irresolution of the King, and the slender scruples which would be felt as to the mode and manner of his destruction by those who had the inclination, and would very probably soon acquire the power, to put an end to his existence. He was ruminating deeply and painfully on these circumstances, when he heard the bars of his dungeon slowly withdrawn, and shortly afterwards a person, with whose features he was well acquainted, entered the apartment. The visitor was a tall thin old man, clothed in a robe of black flowing drapery, and holding a white staff in his hand. His hair and his beard were white as silver, and the latter flowed down to his waist. His small grey eyes sparkled with a peculiar, and, a stranger would perhaps think, with a preternatural bright-

ness. His forehead was high and pale, and his features, though deeply furrowed with age, were still remarkably handsome and even majestic, and wore an expression of uncommon intelligence and sagacity. The Duke started as he entered his prison chamber, and then taking his hand, gazed wistfully but in silence in his face, as if anxious to receive some information which he could not summon resolution enough to inquire after.

"Peace be with you, my son !" said the old man ; "and may the heavenly bodies shower their most benign influences on your head."

"Thanks, reverend Bracy," said the Duke ; "but what say the stars? Do the heavenly bodies smile upon me now?"

"Their language is dubious and mysterious. Thy native planet, Saturn, rose last night enveloped in dark clouds. The influences of Mars and Jupiter were adverse to it, while Venus, which when last I drew thy horoscope, was in conjunction with it, was no longer visible."

"And what, good father, may these signs portend?" asked Suffolk tremblingly.

"That the King and the Barons," answered Bracy, "are hostile to you, and that the influence of the Queen is no longer able to protect you."

“Ha!” said the Duke, “sayest thou so? then De la Pole is indeed lost!”

“Nay, nay,” said Bracy; “I know not that yet; if I read aright the prophetic language of the stars, there is yet a hope that you may escape the impending evil.”

“Tell me what hope there is, good father.”

“You will be safe, my son, if you escape the dangers of the Tower.”

“If ——,” said Suffolk despondingly; and his features, which for a moment had beamed with hope, again exhibited the paleness of despair. “*If* I escape the dangers of the Tower! Alas! those are the only dangers with which I am menaced. Were I once emancipated from these fatal walls, exile, penury, or any evil with which it may please Heaven to afflict me, should be submitted to with resignation and even with cheerfulness.”

While the Duke spake these words the dungeon door again opened, and Sir Anthony Tyrrell, the Deputy Lieutenant of the Tower, stood before him.

“What news, good Tyrrell?” asked the prisoner.

“I have just received a message from the King.”

“And is there aught in that message that touches me?”

"Its contents touch your Grace, and no one else," said the Lieutenant.

"Methinks, Sir Anthony," said Suffolk, "you seem in no great haste to communicate them. Tell me the whole, the worst. Are the days of William de la Pole numbered?"

"My Lord," said Tyrrell, "my tidings are of a mingled character, good and ill. Your Grace is no longer a prisoner, but at liberty to depart the Tower."

"Ha!" said Suffolk, while his eye sparkled, and a mysterious glance was exchanged between him and the astrologer; "then the dangers of the Tower are escaped. Thanks, Tyrrell, for these thy good tidings. Now tell me what thou hast to say of ill? Methinks I can bear the worst?"

"Your Grace is banished the realm; and if found in England three days hence, is condemned to die the death of a traitor."

"Not three hours, good Tyrrell, would I willingly encumber this ungrateful soil with my presence. But my wife—my son—" a tear started to his eye and his frame shook with a sudden emotion. "John de la Pole is young and rash, and surrounded by enemies who will never forgive him the name which he bears. Tarry awhile, good Tyrrell, while I es-

say to commit to paper the last prayers and wishes of his banished father."

The Duke then sat down at the stone table which we have already mentioned, and while a thousand varying emotions made their transit over his face, but with a firm and unshaken hand, he wrote the following epistle :—

" My dear and only well-beloved son, I beseech our Lord in heaven, the maker of all the world, to bless you, and to send you ever grace to love him and to dread him, to the which as far as a father may charge his child, I both charge you and pray you to set all your spirits and wits to do, and to know his holy laws and commandments by the which ye shall, with his great mercy, pass all the great tempests and troubles of this wretched world.

" And that also weetingly, ye do nothing for love nor dread of any earthly creature that should displease him. And whenever any frailty maketh you to fall, beseech his mercy soon to call you to him again with repentance, satisfaction, and contrition of your heart, never more in will to offend him.

" Secondly, next him, above all earthly things, to be true liegeman in heart, in will, in thought, in deed, unto the King, our high and dread sovereign

Lord, to whom, both ye and I be so much bound, charging you as father can and may, rather to die than to be the contrary, or to know any thing that were against the welfare or prosperity of his most royal person ; but that, as far as your body and life may stretch, ye live and die to defend it, and to let his Highness have knowledge thereof in all the haste ye can.

“ Thirdly, in the same wise I charge you, my dear son, always, as ye be bounden by the commandment of God to do, to love, to worship your lady and mother ; and also, that ye obey alway her commandments, and believe her counsels and advices in all your works, the which dread not but shall be best and truest to you.

“ And if any other body would steer you to the contrary, to flee the counsel in any wise, for ye will find it nought and evil.

“ Furthermore, as far as father may and can, I charge you in any wise to flee the company and counsel of proud men, of covetous men, and of flattering men, the more especially and mightily to withstand them, and not to draw or to meddle with them with all your might and power ; and to draw to you and to your company, good and virtuous men, and such as be of good conversa-

tion and of truth, and by them shall ye never be deceived or repent you of.

“ Moreover, never follow your own wit in no wise, but in all your works, of such folks, as I write of above, ask your advice and counsel, and doing thus, with the mercy of God, ye shall do right well, and live in right much worship and great heart’s rest and ease.

“ And I will be to you as good lord and father as my heart can think.

“ And last of all, as heartily and lovingly as ever father blessed his child on earth, I give you the blessing of our Lord and of me, which of his infinite mercy increase you in all virtue and good living: and that your blood may, by his grace, from kindred to kindred, multiply in this earth, to do his service in such wise as after the departing from this wretched world here, ye and they may glorify him eternally amongst his angels in Heaven.

“ Written of my hand,

“ The day of my departing from this land,

“ Your true and loving father,

“ SUFFOLK.”*

* This affecting, and for the period at which it is written, very elegant piece of epistolary composition, is a genuine letter of Suffolk’s, and is preserved by Sir John Fenn, in his

“Tyrrell,” said the Duke placing the letter in the Lieutenant’s hands, and accompanying it with a jewel which he plucked from his bosom, “see that this letter be faithfully delivered to my son, and keep the bauble in token of the once mighty Duke of Suffolk’s gratitude for the kindness and forbearance of his gaoler—and now, farewell, the dangers of the Tower are escaped.”

As he spake these words, and was preparing to leave his dungeon, a tremendous shout was heard, mixed with groans and execrations, and one of the yeomen of the guard rushed into the apartment.

“Save, save, yourself, my lord, the mob have attacked the Tower, and forced open the great gate. Their cry is that the King means to defraud them of their vengeance, by sending you out of the kingdom. The yeomen are defending the inner gate, and notwithstanding the vast numbers of the assailants, they hope to be able to maintain it until they receive a reinforcement. Ha!” he added as another shout was heard, and the gate gave way with

collection of original letters, written during the reigns of Henry the VI. Edward the IV. and Richard the III. It does not look like the production of a man stained with such crimes as have been imputed to Suffolk.

a tremendous crash, "that hope is vain. My lord duke, look for mercy in heaven, for it has fled from you on earth."

By this time the long corridor leading to Suffolk's dungeon, was filled with an infuriated mob, who were advancing with the utmost rapidity to secure their victim. One man of Herculean proportions and ferocious countenance, armed with a massive club, was considerably in advance of his companions, and rushed into Suffolk's dungeon, almost before the yeoman had concluded his address. With a frantic yell he darted at the Duke, and with his uplifted bludgeon would have dashed him to the earth, had not Sir Arthur Tyrrell hastily drawn his sword from his scabbard, and sheathed it in the assassin's side. The ruffian uttered one long groan, his weapon dropped hurtless, and he fell a bleeding corpse to the ground.

These events happened in an instant, but the same instant had sufficed to enable the yeoman to close the door of the dungeon and to turn the key in the massive lock in the inside, so that when the mob arrived, they found themselves unable to procure admittance.

"My Lord," said the yeoman, "quickly exchange clothes with this dead ruffian. The door

will not resist the attack for 'five minutes. Help, help, Sir Walter !"

As he thus spake, the populace hammered against the door of their dungeon, with their feet, hands, and clubs, and uttered the most frantic and furious exclamations, while Tyrrell and the yeoman assisted the prisoner to complete the disguise of himself and of the corpse. At length the door was burst open, and Suffolk brandishing the assassin's club, and rushing towards those who now entered, exclaimed ; " Courage, comrades, courage, the traitor and butcher is no more. Behold him there !"

One long loud shout of fiend-like exultation burst from the crowd as they beheld the lifeless body wrapped in the robes of the Duke of Suffolk, and then wielding their clubs they wreaked their hatred on the lifeless carcase of their supposed enemy, and by that means very speedily prevented the possibility of the features being identified, or the cheat which had been practised upon them detected.

In the evening of the day on which these events occurred, a party assembled in one of the most obscure of those taverns which then abounded in the neighbourhood of Eastcheap. It was composed of five or six persons, whose dresses and conversation

proclaimed them to belong to the lowest classes of London citizens; but their lowering brows, the gloomy hateful fire of their eyes, and the gloating exultation, whenever the name of Suffolk was mentioned, which they expressed at his supposed death, indicated that they belonged to that class of political fanatics who advocated the cause of the White Rose, or York Faction.

“ I marvel, Captain Nicholas,” said one, “ that your brother, to whom it is said that the nation is indebted for this patriotic achievement, has not yet joined us.”

The person addressed was a middle aged man, tall, and marvellously ill favoured. A sabre-cut above his left brow added to the naturally ruffian-like character of his features. His eyes were small, deep sunk in his head, and sparkled with an unnatural brightness. His long shaggy grey hair fell in elf locks on his shoulders, and his dress and accoutrements showed that he was a mariner, or probably what in those days was nearly synonymous, a pirate.

“ Tut! man, he has but hastened to the Duke of York to make sure of the reward. Yet I would he were here, for my vessel is under weigh already, and should any of Queen Margaret’s emissaries surprise

us before we set sail, the Duke's gold would be but a sorry recompense for the measure which we must dance under the gibbet by the time that the cock crows on the morrow."

"Talkest thou of gibbets, Master Walter Nicholas," said another of his companions: "Mass! I blush for thee, that so craven a thought should intrude on thy imagination on so glorious a day as this. The tyrant Suffolk is dead; the White Rose shall soon be planted so high that its blushing rival shall turn paler than itself for very spite; and then hey for the gallant rovers of the sea, when Duke Richard wears the crown of England!"

"Peace, peace! Whitmore," said another of the gang, "even stone walls have ears; so think not that a crazy woody hostelry like this is a place in which to blab the brave Duke's secrets. Let us rather wile away the time until John Nicholas arrives by singing a catch.

This suggestion being unanimously acceded to, the company joined voices very lustily. The reader will recollect that the catch was a sort of antiquated glee, the chief merit of which lay, not in the words, but the music; and the humour frequently consisted in each singer calling every one of his companions a knave, and receiving the same compliment from

him in return. That which was sung on the present occasion ran as follows :—

“ Sing, sing we the merryman's stave,
And let each man call his fellow a knave,
The treble for me, and the tenor for thee,
And thy deep voice the bass shall be :
 He 's a knave who will not sing out rarely.
Trowl, trowl, the wassailing bowl,
The juice that it bears is the dew of the soul ;
Wherever its generous influence it showers
Wit, humour and fancy come forth like spring flowers,
Let us quaff, boys, and make the rich heritage ours ;
 You 're a knave—you 're a knave—
 You 're a knave—you 're a knave—
 He 's a knave who will not drink out fairly.”

“ Peace, peace ! you brawling idiots,” said a man rushing in upon them, whose belted sword and golden spurs proclaimed him to belong to the order of knighthood. “ Is this the way in which ye should spend your time when the Duke's enemies are triumphant, and are laughing at the frustration of all his schemes ?”

“ Good Sir Humphrey Arden,” said he whom his companions had addressed as Captain Nicholas, “ lacking better employment, we were but having a rouse until John Nicholas's arrival.”

“ And if your rouse last till then,” said the

Knight, "it will not be finished before the day of judgment."

"Ha! Sir Knight," said Nicholas, grasping his sword, "has the Duke dared ——; does he think to hide his crime by despatching his emissary?"

"The Duke has slain John Nicholas," said Arden.

"The Duke of York!" exclaimed Nicholas.

"Of Suffolk," said the Knight.

"By Heaven!" added the Pirate, "I am cheated—I am scoffed at. Did not my brother himself slay that Duke? Did not I see him stretched lifeless in his dungeon, with his peacock's feathers, his ducal robes and garter, weltering in his blood?"

"It was thy own brother, Walter Nicholas, whose bleeding corse thou sawest. The Duke slew him as he rushed upon him in his cell, and then exchanging clothes with his victim, he made his escape through the midst of the assembled populace."

"Now, by Heaven!" said the Pirate, "there wanted not this. Plantagenet's gold was enough to induce me to spill the blood of a better man than De la Pole; the hatred which I felt for my country's tyrant was a motive of mere surplusage; but now my brother's blood is on his hands, let him flee whither he will, I'll drag him from the foot of

King Louis's throne ; he shall feel my hand at his throat, though surrounded by a thousand Irish kernes ; the trace of his footsteps on the land, of his keel upon the sea, will be visible to the eyes of Walter Nicholas."

" Gallant hearted Walter," said Sir Humphrey Arden, " I knew that such would be thy feeling. The Duke of York commends himself to you and your noble crew. This," taking a bag of gold from his pouch, " is but a small earnest of the reward which he destines for you after you have made Suffolk an headless man. But you hear me not, good Walter," added Arden, observing that the pirate kept his eyes fixed moodily on the ground, and seemed lost in his own reflections.

" Proceed, proceed, I hear thee now ; thou talkest of spilling Suffolk's blood—"

" 'Tis of that I would speak, gentle friend. The traitor is now, as the Duke has learned by sure intelligence, far on the road to Dover. On the morning after the morrow, he will embark for Calais, and if thou, Master Nicholas, couldst intercept him ?"

" If!" said the pirate starting up, and snatching his cap, " Aboard ! gallants ! aboard ! Farewell, Sir Knight of Arden. Commend me humbly to his good Grace of York, and say that if the sight of the

gory head of Suffolk will contribute to the soundness of his slumbers, he shall not long toss upon a restless couch for the want of such a spectacle."

Thus saying, he rushed out of the hostelry, followed by his comrades, and took the road to the water side, while the Knight waving his hand to them, pursued his journey in an opposite direction.

In the mean time, the Duke of Suffolk no sooner found himself out of his gloomy prison, than still preserving his disguise, he bent his steps towards the house of a faithful retainer of his, named Stephen Bassett, which was situated on the strand of the river Thames between the cities of London and Westminster. Here he found his loyal adherent in an agony of grief, having just heard the report of the Duke's assassination in the Tower. There was little time for the exchange either of congratulations or courtesies, as the indignation of the mob on the discovery of their error—a discovery which could not be long delayed, would no doubt rage with tenfold vehemence. Bassett had had a carriage and horses for some hours waiting in readiness, to convey his master to Dover. They therefore stepped into this vehicle without delay, which after four-and-twenty hours' hard travelling, deposited them safely on the evening of the next day at the door of Sir

Richard Fitzmaurice the Constable of Dover, a tried and trusty friend to the Duke of Suffolk.

"Welcome, my noble Lord," said Fitzmaurice, "thrice welcome; we have heard strange rumours respecting your Grace's mishaps, and almost feared that the King's clemency had been rendered of no avail by the blood-thirstiness of a brutal mob."

"Thanks, good Sir Richard," said Suffolk, returning the cordial grasp with which his friend greeted him. "I am safe now, and unless those shining oracles," pointing to the stars which then shone with a peculiar brightness, "can lie, I am beyond the reach of danger."

"It is the book," said Fitzmaurice, gazing on the starry sky, "of unerring wisdom and infallible truth. Tell me what is written in those shining leaves, as to the destiny of my friend."

"That I shall be safe, Fitzmaurice, when I have escaped the dangers of the Tower."

"And thou hast escaped them all, noble Suffolk; but haste thee, haste thee, to take such refreshment and brief slumber as the time will allow. At day-break the vessel sails for Calais, for even at this distance from London, your enemies are so numerous as to render it imprudent for you to embark during the broad sun light. The wind is

fresh and fair, and when the tide serves, will waft you speedily to Calais."

The Duke saw the necessity of following his friend's advice, and after partaking of the refreshment offered him, he repaired to his chamber, and throwing himself on his couch, soon sunk into a profound slumber. His agitation and fatigue had worn out his bodily strength and thrown it into repose, but his mind was still active and awake, and tortured by uneasy and fearful dreams. He fancied himself once more in the Tower, loaded with fetters and exposed to the gibes and jeers of persecutors. Another time he was mounting that fatal hill in the vicinity of his dungeon, for the purpose of laying his head upon the block, while a grim and ghastly figure carried an axe before him. Then the scene changed, and he imagined himself on the sea, speeding with a fair wind and flowing sheet towards Calais. His heart bounded with delight, the ramparts of Calais appeared before him, "the dangers of the Tower are escaped!" he exclaimed, when suddenly turning his eyes towards the middle of the vessel, he saw a tall turret rising up from the deck instead of a mast, and although a flag floated from the top, it bore not the colours of the vessel, but was the same gloomy rag which he had seen stream-

ing in the wind as he entered his fearful prison at London. At that moment a voice, which sounded in his ear awfully as the Archangel's trump cried out—" *To the block! to the block!*" with such distinctness, that he started pale and trembling from his couch, and saw his friend Fitzmaurice by his side, whose voice it was which had aroused him from his sleep; but the words uttered, which his disordered fancy had distorted to such a fearful meaning, were—" *Aboard! aboard!*"

"Despatch! despatch! my good Lord, Basset is already on board. The vessel only waits your Grace's arrival to spread her sails merrily before the breeze, and bear you to peace and safety in Calais."

The Duke had no time to ruminate on the ominous interpretation, which in his dream had been given to the words of his friend, but after hastily wringing his hand and throwing a rich collar of pearls round his neck, he proceeded to the place of embarkation, rowed to the vessel, and mounting the deck with the utmost rapidity, was speedily on his way toward Calais.

They had not been on the waters above half an hour, before a strange sail appeared in sight. It was a very large vessel, which, as it approached the

Duke's ship, was observed to carry numerous guns, was well manned, and sailed with astonishing swiftness. As she approached Suffolk's vessel, she hung out a black flag, and lowered a boat, while the crew gave three astounding cheers.

"Death! my Lord," said Basset, "I fear some treachery. These villains mean us no good."

"Peace, fool, peace!" said the Duke, "the dangers of the Tower are passed. The worst that can befall us now will be to be attacked by pirates, who for a slight ransom, will allow us to pass on uninjured. They know not my rank, and therefore will not be exorbitant in their demands."

By this time five men from the boat ascended the deck of the Duke's vessel.

"You have passengers," said one.

"We have two gentlemen," answered the commander, whom we are carrying to Calais. What would ye with them?"

"That question is one which our noble Captain Nicholas can best answer. You must on board with us, gallants," he added, addressing the Duke and Basset.

"Be it so, my friend," said Suffolk; "your Captain is doubtless no such churl, but that we shall meet and part in good fellowship. On with me, Stephen."

Thus saying, they descended the gangway, entered the boat, and rowing to the larger vessel, were speedily on deck and introduced to the commander and his crew.

The appearance of the persons in whose power they found themselves was such as might have daunted the stoutest heart; it exhibited nothing, however, that was not in accordance with the violent and lawless occupation which they followed.

"Friend," said Suffolk, addressing the Captain, "you shall find us neither misers nor beggars: name but our ransoms, and let me proceed speedily to Calais, and my friend shall remain an hostage to secure payment within an hour after I am set on shore."

"Your ransom," said the Captain gruffly, and addressing Basset, "is a thousand crowns: are ye content?"

"It shall be paid, most noble Captain, said Suffolk; "and now, of your courtesy, may I crave to know my own?"

"Your heart's blood, or your head," said the pirate, smiling grimly and following his words with an obstreperous laugh. "Choose ye between them."

Suffolk started and turned pale; for, although such lawless characters as stood before him were in the

habit of playing off their coarse and ruffianly jokes upon their prisoners, these last words were spoken in a tone of earnestness and feeling which made it difficult for him to believe that they were not uttered in sincerity.

“ Good Captain,” he said, “ if thou knowest the urgent nature of my business at Calais, thou wouldest not detain me now to listen to thy idle jesting.”

“ Jestings ! good fellow, call you it ? ” said the Pirate. “ By Heaven, all jesting shall speedily terminate, since it sorts so ill with your inclination. Comrades, bear this fellow to the long-boat, the side thereof is but an unceremonious sort of block, but Tower Hill itself could not perform the business more effectually.”

“ Off, traitors ! ” said Suffolk, as the Pirate’s myrmidons laid hold of him. “ Ye know not whom your plebeian hands have dared to touch. I am not what I seem.”

“ Certes,” said the Captain, “ nor so honest a man as poor John Nicholas, in whose garments thou hast wrapped thyself.”

“ Ha ! fellow,” said Suffolk ; “ then thou knowest me.”

“ Right well,” answered his captor ; “ and so

well that I would speedily be rid of thee. Bear him to the long-boat ; fellows, away with him !”

“ Ruffians, avaunt !” said Suffolk, stamping on the deck, and, with the more than natural strength which terror and indignation had given him, breaking from their grasp. “ If this ruffian would, without remorse, shed the blood of a prince, you, my good friends, will, I know, not allow him to gratify his butcher’s wish. Let me escape ; my friend will remain with you a pledge for my fidelity ; a thousand crowns to each man shall be the price of my safety ; and, for assurance that I have the power to perform what I promise, know that I am the Duke of Suffolk.”

The Duke looked round with a proud glance ; but instead of the awe and respect which he anticipated would follow the mere communication of his name, he saw a malignant sneer on every lip.

“ We know you well, De la Pole,” said Nicholas, “ but not for the Duke of Suffolk, since, before your arrival in our own good ship, we had solemnly tried and condemned you, deprived you of your titles and honours, and sentenced you to the block ; therefore, I pray you, make a short shrift, and bow down your head peaceably, for the Duke of York is

but a slippery creditor, and 'I shall lose my reward unless I claim it speedily.'

"The perjured traitor! the vile Plantagenet!" said Suffolk, lifting up his hands and eyes to Heaven. "But it cannot be," he added, and a gleam of hope again brightened his features. "Beware, fellows, how you draw down upon yourselves the vengeance of Heaven. Do not load your souls with the sin of a guilty attempt which it is impossible should be successful. The stars cannot lie; and it is written in their shining book, that I shall be safe when I have escaped the dangers of the Tower."

"Despair thy charm," said Nicholas, turning suddenly round and clapping his prisoner on the shoulder. "Behold! De la Pole, behold!"

He pointed towards the stern of the vessel, where the ship's name was painted. Suffolk followed with his eye the direction of his finger, and there, while his hair bristled on his head, and his blood curdled in his heart, he read in characters painfully distinct, the fatal name, "THE TOWER."

"Oh! God!" he said, sinking on his knee, while the cold drops poured down his brow; "lost! lost indeed for ever! And yet," he added, starting up and rushing towards the vessel, "there is still one hope—the dangers of the Tower may yet be escaped."

He was springing into the water, but the brawny arms of Nicholas and one of his comrades arrested him. "Bear him to the long-boat," said the former, "a moment's delay is too tedious a dallying with so precious a prize."

It was a delay which he did not suffer, for the pirates, with their unhappy victim in their clutch, darted down the gangway and into the long-boat with the velocity of lightning. Here the prisoner was held down with his head on the side of the boat, while one of the seamen unsheathed his sabre and prepared to strike the fatal blow.

"Put up your bright sharp sword, comrade," said Nicholas; "it is too honourable a weapon for such a traitor to die by. This," he added, picking up an old rusty sword which lay at the bottom of the boat, "is a fitter instrument wherewith to spill his scoundrel blood."

A roar of savage delight burst from the spectators as the executioner took the proffered weapon with a hideous grin, and let it fall, after aiming a tremendous blow, on the neck of his victim. A shudder pervaded even the ranks of these ferocious pirates, as they saw that the blow had not taken effect, and heard the groans and saw the blood of the yet living prisoner. A second blow descended and cut deeper, but still without being fatal.

“Mercy ! mercy !” groaned out Suffolk, as a third and a fourth blow fell on his neck. The fifth was aimed with better effect, and at length by placing his foot on the rusty sword, and driving it with all his might through the neck of his victim, the executioner severed the head from the body, and the spirit of Suffolk was placed beyond the reach of his tormentors.*

Thus was the prophecy fulfilled, for De la Pole escaped not the dangers of the Tower.

* Fenn's Letters. Hall's Chronicle.

The Line of Work.

For the truth and plainness of the case,
I pluck this pale and maiden blossom here,
Giving my verdict on the white rose side."

SHAKSPEARE.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

Edward the Fourth.

1461. EDWARD defeated the Lancastrians at Tooton. Henry, with his queen and son, escaped into Scotland.

1463. Margaret went over to France to solicit succours : she returned with two thousand men, and then collected a large army, which was entirely defeated by Lord Montague, near Hexham. Margaret, with her son, fled to her father in Anjou. Henry was seized and sent to the Tower of London.

1464. Edward sent the Earl of Warwick to contract a marriage for him with Bona of Savoy, sister-in-law to the King of France. Edward, during the Earl's absence, fell in love with and married a beautiful lady, Elizabeth Gray. Warwick returned to England full of indignation.

1466. Louis XI was at war with the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany. Edward entered into an alliance with Burgundy, giving him his sister in marriage.

The Duke of Clarence, Edward's brother, concurred privately in Warwick's animosity to Edward, and married his daughter.

1469. An insurrection broke out in Yorkshire. The malcontents defeated the royal army, and put its commander, the Earl of Pembroke, and the Queen's father, the Earl of Rivers, to death.

1470. The Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick levied troops, and declared themselves at the head of the rebels. They afterwards defeated Edward and took him prisoner. He made his escape, raised another army, and defeated Lord

Wells, near Stamford. Clarence and Warwick fled to France. Louis XI. promised them aid, and sent for Margaret, who was with her father in Sicily.

Clarence and Warwick landed at Dartmouth, and their army increasing prodigiously, marched against Edward, who was encamped at Lynn. He being alarmed, and imagining that his army was disaffected, fled on board a vessel to his brother-in-law, the Duke of Burgundy. Clarence and Warwick marched to London, released Henry, and again proclaimed him King. A Parliament declared Edward an usurper, and settled the succession on Henry and his heirs.

1471. Edward landed at Ravenspur, in Yorkshire, with about two thousand men. Warwick raised an army about Leicester to oppose them; but Edward arrived in London, which opened its gates to him. Henry was again taken and sent to the Tower.

Warwick marched towards London: on the road the Duke of Clarence deserted to his brother with twelve thousand men. Warwick was defeated and slain at Barnet.

Margaret and her son were defeated at Tewkesbury; the prince killed; and she sent to the Tower, where her husband Henry died in a short time.

Jasper, Earl of Pembroke, fled with his nephew Richmond into Brittany.

1475. Edward, having entered into a treaty with the Duke of Burgundy, invaded France; but finding himself deceived by the Duke, made a peace with Louis XI. and the two monarchs held a conference on the bridge of Montereau, where it was agreed that Margaret should be released on Louis paying fifty thousand crowns for her ransom.

1478. The Duke of Clarence was accused and committed to the Tower, where he was found murdered.

1483. Edward died on the 9th April.

The Wooing at Grafton.

I cannot hide
My love to thee. 'Tis like the sun conceal'd
In watery clouds, whose glory will break through,
And, spite opposure, scorns to be conceal'd."

HEYWOOD.

The Wooing at Grafton.

IT was one of those fresh and balmy summer evenings which sometimes succeed a day of scarcely endurable sultriness. The breathless stillness and heat of noon had given place to a refreshing breeze which rippled the waves of the Ouse, and stirred the countless leaves of the forest, through which the river meandered. The sun was setting in unclouded magnificence ; and although his rays had greatly declined in intensity and strength, they had lost nothing of their splendour and their brightness. The birds, whose floods of melody appeared to have been dried up during the day, now poured forth a tide of song so full and resistless, that it seemed as if they intended during the short interval previous to the hour of roosting, to make amends for the silence of so many hours.

A lady of a stately figure and features, of exquisite beauty, was walking on the banks of the river. She was followed by a female attendant, and led by the hand a youth who seemed to be about nine or

ten years of age. She was tall and finely formed ; her eyes were large, black and bright ; her ringlets, which were as black and almost as bright, fell down to her shoulders ; her complexion was exquisitely fair, approaching even to paleness. She seemed to have scarcely attained twenty years of age, but the tears which streamed down her cheeks, the melancholy expression of her eye, especially when it glanced on the stripling by her side, and the widow's weeds in which she was apparelled, too plainly told that, young as she was, sorrow had outstripped time, and premature clouds had darkened the morning of her days.

" Adelaide," she said, addressing her attendant, " see'st thou yonder alder-tree, how it gleams and brightens in the rays of the sun ; but that sun is setting ; into those crimson clouds beneath him that look like a sanguinary sea, he will shortly sink, and then the tree which now gleams and brightens will be surrounded with desolation and darkness."

" But to-morrow, madam—" said the attendant.

" Talk not of the morrow to me," interrupted the lady—" to me, on whose darkened fortunes no morrow shall ever dawn. Alas ! like yonder tree I flourished ; brightness was on my head and around my path ; but the sun that shone upon me has set, has set in a sea of blood."

“ Sweet lady !” said Adelaide, “ but I will talk to thee of the morrow, for a morrow of joy and gladness shall dawn upon thee yet : King Edward is gallant and generous ; and although Sir John Grey fell fighting the battles of the Red Rose, he will not visit on his widow and orphans the transgressions of the husband and the father.”

“ Alas ! Adelaide, only this day have I received a letter from my noble mother, who informs me that all her importunities have been in vain. The King has been besieged by her in his palace at Westminster more unremittingly than ever he was by Clifford or Northumberland, or the most zealous Lancastrian, when shut up in some iron fortress which constituted his only territory. The ruthless Richard Plantagenet, he whom they now call the Duke of Gloucester, stands between him and every generous disposition of his heart. The Lancastrians are devoted to the slaughter, and the crime of my dead lord, in gallantly supporting to his latest gasp the cause of his lawful sovereign, can only be expiated by the beggary of his widow and his orphans.”

“ Would that the gallant King,” said Adelaide, “ could but once behold that fair face wet with tears, and know that a single word from his lips would suffice to dry them, methinks that the for-

feited estates of your husband would then be soon restored to you."

"And in truth, gentle Adelaide," said the Lady Gray, "a wild hope that perchance in the course of the chase, which he is to-day following in this neighbourhood, I might come in contact with him, and have an opportunity of falling at his feet and pleading my cause in person, has lured me from Grafton Manor, and kept me wandering by the river-side till the hour of sunset."

"The dews of evening are descending, Madam, and the chase is over. Let us return, lest we be intruded upon by some of the wild gallants in King Edward's train, who are not very scrupulous in their mode of courtship when they encounter a fair lady alone and unprotected. Trust rather to the continued importunity of your noble mother. The Duchess has a persuasive speech, and the King a susceptible heart. Let us return to the Manor and hope that all will yet be well."

The lady turned round to retrace her steps in compliance with the advice of her attendant, when she found herself suddenly seized in the grasp of a man who had followed her unperceived, and who now, with very little ceremony, proceeded to overwhelm her with his embraces.

The author of this outrage was by no means one whose personal attractions could render the violence which he committed less unpalatable. He was a short and meagre figure, humpbacked, with legs of an unequal size, and teeth, or rather fangs, which protruded from his mouth, and gave an hideous expression to his face, which otherwise might have possibly been called handsome. His forehead was high and fair, his eyes black and sparkling, and his broad arched brows gave an expression of intelligence and dignity to the upper part of his countenance which strangely contrasted with the grotesqueness and deformity of his figure. He was very richly habited in a robe of blue velvet, lined with silk and glittering with gold—a sword hung by his side, and a cap, adorned with a plume of feathers, and a sparkling diamond in the front, was placed in rather a fantastic and foppish manner upon his head.

The lady shrieked fearfully when she found herself in the arms of this hideous being. “Silence, madam, silence,” he said, “or,” and he touched his dagger, while a cloud as black as midnight gathered on his brow, which, however, instantly gave place to a smile of even bewitching sweetness. “Pardon, pardon,” he added; “that one used to

war and strife should begin with menaces, even when addressing so fair a creature as thou art."

"Unhand me, monster!" said the Lady Gray.

"Sweet lady," he said, "you must unheart me first."

"Desist," said a voice behind them, "or, by Heaven! your heart shall rue the boldness of your hand."

With these words, a young man habited in Lincoln green, with a bow and quiver slung over his shoulders, and bearing a drawn sword in his hand, rushed upon the lady's assailant. He paused, however, as his eye encountered that of this mishapen being—whether it was that he recognized a face familiar to him, or that he felt an emotion of surprise at the hideousness of the creature which he beheld, was not apparent. The latter eyed him with a sullen and malignant smile, and then uttering a loud and discordant laugh, disappeared amidst the recesses of the forest.

The Lady had sunk on the ground exhausted and stupified with terror. Her deliverer hastened to raise her up, while the boy, whose bosom heaved with sobs, caught her hand and covered it with his kisses, and Adelaide sprinkled her pallid and death-like features with water from the river. When

she once more opened her eyes, they rested, upon a being very dissimilar from him in whose arms she had last found herself. The perfect grace and symmetry of his form was only equalled by the sweetness and noble expression of his features, which, save that the curl of his lip and the proud glance of his eye indicated something of a haughty and imperious temperament, approached as nearly as possible to the *beau ideal* of manly beauty. The simplicity and modesty of his dress were as strikingly opposed to the gorgeous apparel, as were his graces of form and feature to the ghastliness and deformity of his late opponent.

“Thanks, gentle Sir,” said the Lady Gray, “thanks for thy timely aid.”

“No thanks are due to me, sweet lady; but to thy fair self I owe unbounded thanks for an opportunity of gazing on so much loveliness. Yet must I be a petitioner for a farther favour—permission to escort you home.”

The lady accepted with gratitude the service which was proffered as a boon; and giving her hand to the graceful cavalier, she proceeded under his escort homewards, attended by the stripling and Adelaide. During this short journey, she had an opportunity of discovering that the elegant and ac-

complished form of her deliverer was but the mirror of his refined and cultivated mind. The wit, vivacity, knowledge of men and manners, originality of thought, and courteous and chivalrous demeanour which he evinced, were such, that, if they did not positively win the heart of the Lady Gray before this their first interview terminated, certainly laid the foundation of a passion, which, as the reader will subsequently learn, exercised a powerful influence over the destinies of both.

"And now, gentle Sir," said the lady, as they arrived at her residence, "welcome to Grafton Manor. Will you please to enter?"

"Not now, sweet Madam!" answered the cavalier; "I am in the King's train, and my services will be missed. Yet may I crave leave to call to-morrow, and inquire after the health of——" He paused, but the lady soon concluded his sentence.

"Of the Lady Gray of Groby," she said, extending her hand to him.

"Ha!" he said, and started, while a dark frown lowered for a moment over his fine features, "the widow of the Lancastrian knight who fell at St. Albans."

"Even that ill-starred woman," said the Lady Gray, while the tears streamed down her features.

“ Farewell ! farewell ! I see that it is a name, which is now unpleasing to all ears.”

“ Nay, nay, sweet Madam,” said the youth, gently detaining her ; “ it is a name which friends and foes ought alike to honour as identified with manly and heroic devotion to a falling cause, and” ———, his voice faltered as he added, in a softer tone, “ with the perfection of female grace and loveliness. You have been a suppliant to the King, Madam, for the restoration of your dead Lord’s forfeited estates.”

“ I have been,” she replied, “ and a most unhappy and unsuccessful one.”

“ The King, Madam, is surrounded by men who entertain small love for the unhappy adherents of the House of Lancaster. I have the honour to serve his Highness. If, Edward March, his poor Esquire, can advance the cause of the Lady Gray, small as may be his abilities to do her good, they shall be all devoted to her service.”

“ Thanks, once more a thousand thanks, generous Sir,” said the Lady. “ The cause of Elizabeth Gray indeed needs all the efforts of her friends to insure for it a prosperous issue. If Master Edward March can do aught to serve it, the blessing of the widow and the fatherless will rest upon his head.”

“ And the blessing of the widow,” thought Master Edward March, after he had taken leave of the lady, and was retracing his steps to the river side, “ will be the blessing of the prettiest woman in England. That of the fatherless I could e’en dispense with ; yet, methinks, it is well that they are fatherless, Heaven rest their father’s soul !”

This short interview caused a strange disturbance in the heart of Elizabeth Grey. The interests of her orphan children, and anxiety to obtain for them the restitution of their father’s forfeited property, had for a long time occupied her mind exclusively. Now a new feeling, she would not venture to call it a passion, seemed at least to mingle with if not to absorb all other considerations. Yet even this came disguised in the garb of her children’s interests, who, she now felt more than ever stood much in need of a protector to supply the place of their deceased parent. The mother of the Lady Gray was Jaqueline of Luxembourg, the Dowager Duchess of Bedford, who had, after the death of her husband, so far sacrificed her ambition to love, that she espoused in second marriage Sir Richard Woodville, a private gentleman, to whom she bore several children ; and among the rest Elizabeth, who was remarkable for the grace and beauty of her

person, as well as for other amiable accomplishments. This young lady had married Sir John Gray, of Groby, by whom she had two sons; and her husband being slain in the second battle of St. Albans, fighting on the side of Lancaster, and his estate being for that reason confiscated, his widow, had retired to live with her mother at her seat of Grafton, in Northamptonshire. The Duchess herself resided principally in London, as well for the purpose of leaving her daughter as much as possible in complete possession of Grafton Court, as to afford the Duchess, by her vicinity to the palace, opportunities for pressing upon the King the propriety of restoring to the widow of Sir John Gray the forfeited estates of her husband. These solicitations, however, had as yet been unavailing, and she was in daily expectation of hearing that the estates, which formed the subject of them, had been bestowed upon some adherent of the House of York.

Such was the posture of her affairs when the Lady Gray became acquainted with Edward March, in the manner which we have narrated. The young esquire called on her the next day, and their second interview confirmed in the bosoms of both the passion which had been excited by the first. March, in addition to his personal attractions, ex-

pressed so much anxiety for the interests of the lady and her children, and such a determination, as soon as the King returned to London, and was at leisure to attend to business, to press the fair widow's suit upon his attention, that the surrender which the lady made of her heart seemed to her to be no less a matter of policy than affection. The youth was not slow in perceiving the impression which he had made on the susceptible bosom of Elizabeth ; and one day, when the parties had scarcely been acquainted a month, he took like Othello "a pliant hour," poured into the lady's listening and not offended ear a confession of his passion, and made an offer of his hand and heart.

"Alas ! good Master March," said she, "thou talkest idly. What hopes can a poor Esquire and the portionless widow of Sir John Gray have of future happiness, by uniting their forlorn fortunes together."

"I have a sword, Madam, which has already done good service, and which, I doubt not, will, on the next field on which it is brandished, win for me the badge of knighthood."

"Or the grave of an esquire !" said the lady mournfully.

"But, Madam, trust to my persuasions, and the

King's goodness of heart for the restoration of your children's inheritance. Will you make your promise of sealing my happiness conditional upon that restoration?"

The youth's eye flashed fire as he put this question to the lady. Her colour came and went—her bosom rose and fell quickly; her heart beat within it tumultuously, and her whole frame trembled like the aspen tree as she paused a few moments before she answered this question, and then, sinking into his arms, exclaimed, "I will, I will! dearest Edward, I am wholly thine."

"Now Heaven's richest blessings fall upon that fair head!" he said, imprinting a fervent kiss on her forehead. "The King departs for London on the morrow, and I must follow in his train. Trust me, sweet Elizabeth, that thy suit shall not want the advocacy of any eloquence which I may possess, and I hope that when I next meet thee, it will be to clasp thee to my bosom as my bride."

The Lady Grey felt more desolate than ever at Grafton Manor after the departure of Edward March from its neighbourhood. She had intrusted him with a letter to the Duchess of Bedford, in which she had simply informed her that the bearer was a gentleman who hoped, from his situation near the

person of the King, to be able to advance the successful progress of their suit to his Highness. To this letter she had received an answer, saying that it had been forwarded to her mother by Mr. March, but that he had not himself called upon the Duchess, nor had she received from him any intelligence as to the success of his efforts on the Lady Gray's behalf. Days and weeks rolled on and the fair widow still remained in total uncertainty as to the state of her affairs, except that each letter which she received from her mother informed her that she found increasing difficulty in procuring interviews with the King, and that the monarch, at such interviews, appeared colder and more adverse than ever to the object for which they were sought.

"Alas ! alas !" said the Lady Gray ; " will Fate never cease to persecute me ? Even this last fond hope—reliance on the affection and on the efforts in my behalf of this young man, has failed me. But it was a wild and an idle hope, and Elizabeth Gray, who has seen so much of the world, ought to have known how delusive are its brightest prospects, and how false its most solemn promises. Edward March has proved inconstant and untrue, and Elizabeth Gray must remain desolate and oppressed."

These painful thoughts agitated her mind as from a terrace in the gardens of Grafton Manor she gazed

on nearly the same scenery which we have described at the commencement of this narrative—the winding Ouse, whose every ripple gleamed like gold in the beams of the declining sun; the massive oaks, which cast their dark shadows round them, but received on their summits and their leaves a share of the glory of the setting luminary; the stately Manor-house in the foreground sending up wreaths of silver smoke into the deep blue sky; and the distant spire of the village-church of Grafton, catching the latest ray of the fast-declining orb of day, and terminating as with a finger of glory the horizon. This was a scene whose simple quiet beauty had often served to calm and soothe her wounded feelings, and to give a tinge of its own brightness to her anticipations of the future: now, however, it only served to bring back painful recollections to her mind—the interview with March: the affections and hopes which sprang from it; and the cruel manner in which all those affections and hopes had been blighted and destroyed.

“Yes,” she added, “it is a wild and idle hope, and he has proved inconstant and untrue.”

At that moment a rustling among the leaves of the bower in which she sat aroused her from her reverie, and starting up, she beheld—not, as for an

instant she had fondly expected, Edward March, but a cavalier of a maturer age and less welcome to her eye, yet nevertheless a right noble and valiant cavalier, her father's brother, Sir William Woodville.

"Gallant uncle!" she said, "right welcome to Grafton manor:—what news from my noble mother?"

"Cold news, heavy news, sweet Elizabeth," said the Knight, and he passed his hand across his eyes.

"Alas! alas!" she said, sinking back into the seat from which she had sprung a moment before full of hopefulness.—"Tell it me then—tell it me, however cold and heavy. Methinks my heart has learned to bear so much, that it can yet bear something—a little, little more—before it breaks."

"Sweet lady," said Sir William, "I am come to inform you that all our hopes of procuring the restitution of your husband's property are over, the meddling interference of a young esquire of the name of March has proved fatal to our cause, he having been discovered to be the same individual who had the boldness to draw his sword on the Duke of Gloucester in Grafton forest, when the King and his retinue were last in this neighbourhood following the pleasures of the chase."

“Ha!” said the lady, wringing her hands and shrieking piteously; “and has that gallant young gentleman, to whom my thoughts have done so much injustice, involved himself in danger on my account; and was that foul mishapen being, from whose odious caresses he rescued me, the Duke of Gloucester? I will hasten to London—I will throw myself at the feet of the gallant King—I will tell him that it was in the holiest cause—in the cause of injured innocence and helplessness, that Edward March dared to draw his sword. I will save him—I will save him.”

“Sweet cousin,” said the Knight, gently detaining her, for she had started from her seat as if to perform the journey to London on the instant—“it is too late—Edward March is no more.”

“Ha!” said the lady, while the blackness of despair gathered on her features, “thou art mad to say it, and I am mad to listen to it.”

Nay, nay, sweet cousin!” said the Knight; “’tis sad truth that I utter. Of the details of this young gentleman’s fate, I can give you no intelligence. All that I know is, that the same messenger from the court who informed the Duchess that your suit was rejected, added that the King had found it necessary to terminate the existence of Edward March.”

"The cold-blooded ruthless tyrant!" said Elizabeth. "Why! every hair on Edward March's head was worth a thousand Gloucesters—that bloated spider—that viperous deformity—that hideous libel on the human form. Uncle, thou wear'st a sword."

"Ay, cousin! and it has done good service in its time. It has dyed the white rose redder than its blushing rival."

"Now then, draw it to perform a noble service than aye. Unsheath it in the cause of murdered innocence—unsheath it in the cause of the helpless and oppressed. Rid the world of a monster in mind and form. Search with it for the heart, if he has one, of this Duke of Gloucester."

"Why, gentle cousin," said the Knight, almost smiling, notwithstanding the heaviness of the news of which he had been the bearer, at the violence of his niece's emotion—"what means this? Surely the loss of your suit to his Highness was not an event so improbable and unexpected, that it should find you thus unprepared to meet the consequences?"

"But the noble gentleman who has perished in the attempt to serve me!" said the lady, weeping.

"Peace be with his ashes!" said the Knight, crossing himself: "but, fair Elizabeth, it is vain and idle

to lament the past. Let us rather provide for the future. The King may yet be prevailed upon to do thee justice. Hasten to the palace; throw thyself at his feet; show him thy orphan children—show him thy sable weeds—above all, show him thy own fair face, and, my life for it, the broad acres of Groby are thy own.”

“Wouldst have me kneel at the feet of a homicide? wouldst have me kiss the hand red with the blood of Edward March? Perish the thought!” said the lady.

“Then perish the children of Sir John Gray!” said the Knight; “perish and starve his widow! Let beggary and desolation cling to that ancient and honourable house!”

“Nay, nay,” said Elizabeth, interrupting him; “thou hast touched me to the quick. I did indeed forget. I will throw myself at the feet of this crowned barbarian—I will dry my tears—I will mask my cheek in smiles—I will procure for my children the restitution of their inheritance, and then I will hasten—”

“To Groby castle?” said the Knight.

“To the grave! to the grave!” said the lady.

Sir William Woodville no sooner saw that his niece acquiesced in his proposition, than he hastened

to execute it, trusting that time would alleviate her sorrow, and not very well understanding all its violence, for the real cause of her sympathy for the fate of Edward March had not occurred to the imagination of the Knight. "The Court, the Court," he said mentally, "is the atmosphere to dry a widow's tears: the tilt and the tournament, the revel and the masque, these are the true comforters of the afflicted. Many a gallant has pierced a lady's heart through the ring, and lured a nobler falcon than ever soared into the air, when he called only to his mounting goshawk." Such were the Knight's reflections as he rode towards London. The lady's, as our readers will easily divine, were of a different and more painful character. Fear and sickly hope, mingled horror and awe, for the personage whom she was about to supplicate; and cureless grief for the loss of the being who had taken such a chivalrous interest in her fate, were the varying emotions by which her bosom was agitated.

The journey to the metropolis was concluded without the occurrence of any incident worthy of record. Elizabeth Gray was speedily clasped in the arms of her mother, who mingled her tears with her own; and then both ladies, accompanied by Sir William Woodville, and the two orphan Grays, pro-

ceeded to the palace at Westminster to make a personal appeal to the bounty of the King.

The monarch was seated in his private chamber, surrounded by the few but distinguished courtiers who had the privilege of access to him there, when it was announced to him that the Lady Gray of Groby craved admittance to the royal presence.

"Tut! tut!" said the King; "this puling widow and her friends think that the King of England has nothing to attend to but the interests of the family of a rebel who died fighting sword in hand against his sovereign. Thrice have I peremptorily refused the supplication of the old Duchess of Somerset, and now the young lady is to play off the battery of her sighs and tears upon me in the hopes of a more prosperous result."

"And in truth, my liege," said the Marquis of Montague, "the young lady has not been badly advised in trying that experiment, if report speaks truly of her charms."

"Sayest thou so! cousin Montague," said the King; "then in God's name let her enter." And then carefully adjusting his robes, and assuming an air between the dignity of a monarch and the assumption of an Adonis conscious of his personal attractions, he leaned back in his throne.

The door of the presence chamber unfolded, and the suppliant party, attired in deep mourning, approached the foot of the throne. The Lady Gray was led forward by Sir William Woodville, while the Duchess and her disinherited grandchildren came behind. A murmur of approbation and surprise passed from lip to lip, among the courtiers, as they gazed on the surpassingly beautiful features of the fair petitioner whom sorrow had not robbed of one of her charms, but had rather improved and heightened them all. She entered with head depressed and downcast eyes, not daring to look at the person whom she supplicated, and for whom, as the murderer of her lover, and the sovereign of the realm, she entertained a sentiment in which abhorrence and reverence were strangely mingled.

"A boon! a boon! most dread sovereign," she said, sinking at the monarch's feet.

"Rise, gentle lady," said the King, "and name, if thou canst, the boon which thy sovereign will refuse thee."

"Ha!" said Elizabeth, starting, as though the voice of the dead had sounded in her ears. "Those tones—that voice! surely I am not mad." She lifted her eyes towards the King, and an expression of wonder and delight burst from her lips, as she recognized beneath the royal diadem the features

of Edward March. That expression, however, was repressed as a deep feeling of fear and awe came over her, and, sinking again to the ground, she exclaimed—"Pardon! gracious Sire. Pardon! pardon!"

"Pardon! sweet Elizabeth," said the King, descending from the throne, and raising her in his arms; "and wherefore——? But thou hast a petition, fair lady, to which thou wouldest crave our answer."

"Even so, dread Sir," said the lady; "it is to pray of your royal grace, and favour to grant to my orphan children the restitution of the forfeited estates of their father, Sir John Gray of Groby. Great King! good King! listen to my prayer. Think that the transgressions of the father have been expiated by his death, and that, whatever they were, his infant sons had no participation in them. And oh! gracious Sire, let not the boldness of their mother, at a time when she knew not the illustrious person with whom she conversed, stand in the way of your Highness's grace and favour towards the children."

"Thy petition, fair Elizabeth," said the King, "is granted, and Heaven prosper the gallant house of Gray of Groby! But now it is my turn to play the supplicant. Thou rememberest a promise made to

Edward March—a conditional promise, it is true, but the condition is now performed. The poor youth—rest his soul!—is no more. When King Edward entered his ancient palace of Wesminster, he found it necessary to terminate the existence of Edward March.”

“Thus lowly,” said the lady, “do I once more crave thy royal pardon. Thou who hast proved the husband of the widow, and the father of the fatherless, accept their blessings and their prayers. The land which your Highness has restored to them shall be held for the safeguard of your royal person and the terror of your enemies ; but jest not thus cruelly with your handmaid, and pardon the presumption and boldness of which she was unwittingly guilty.”

“But under your favour, Lady Gray,” said the monarch, laughing, “I have not yet proved myself the husband of the widow and the father of the fatherless ; and until I do so, I will not accept either their benedictions or their prayers. As the representative of the deceased Edward March, I will take care and see that the promise which was so solemnly made by him be performed. My lords and gentlemen,” he added, turning to the wondering courtiers, “Behold your Queen !”

“ God save Queen Elizabeth !” exclaimed all present. “ Long live the noble Queen of England !”

“ And now, my Lord of Canterbury,” said the King, “ your part in this day’s solemnities remains to be performed.”

Thus saying, he led the Lady Gray to the chapel of the palace, followed by her mother and children, Sir William Woodville, the prelate, and the rest of the courtiers. There the nuptial knot was indissolubly tied between the beggar and the king—the monarch and her who had so lately been his humble petitioner.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

Edward the Fifth.

1483. BEFORE Edward the Fourth's death the Court was much divided into parties, owing to the great numbers of the Queen's relations who were promoted to the rank of peers, to the great mortification of the ancient nobility. The Prince of Wales, when his father died, was at Ludlow with his Governor, the Earl of Rivers, the Queen's brother, to keep the Welsh in awe by his near vicinity to them. Being proclaimed King in London, the Queen sent to her brother to bring the young King to the metropolis. The Duke of Buckingham and Lord Hastings informed Richard, Duke of Gloucester, the King's uncle, who was in the north quelling an insurrection, of these events, and advised him to seize the King, and wrest the government out of the hands of the new nobility. It does not appear that Richard had hitherto formed any design of assuming the crown himself; but his subsequent conduct shows that he was not averse to such a proceeding. Richard accordingly met young Edward at Northampton, took possession of his person, and sent the Earl of Rivers and two others of the King's principal attendants to Pontefract, where they were soon afterwards put to death. Richard and the Duke of Buckingham escorted the King to London in great state; but the Queen, informed of what had happened, fled with her other children to the sanctuary of Westminster.

Richard knowing that he could not proceed to the execution of his purpose without having possession of the Duke of York, the King's brother, called a Council, which declared him protector: and the Archbishop of Canterbury was sent to the

Queen to desire her permission for the Duke of York to come and live with the King; and to acquaint her, that if she refused, the sanctuary would be violated. She, with very great reluctance, at last consented and took leave of her son with tears, foreseeing the melancholy consequences. Richard, under some pretext, now lodged the King and his brother in the Tower, and revealed his project to Buckingham, who heartily entered into it.

Hastings refused to enter into the views of Richard. The latter pretended that he had entered into a plot against him, and ordered him to be beheaded.

Jane Shore, who had been mistress to Edward IV. but afterwards lived with Hastings, was likewise accused of having, by witchcraft, withered the Protector's arm. Richard, not being able to support this accusation, caused her to be prosecuted before the Ecclesiastical Court for incontinence; and she was sentenced to do penance before all the people in a white sheet at St. Paul's.

Richard spread reports that Edward the Fourth's children were illegitimate, and that neither Edward nor the Duke of Clarence were the Duke of York's children. The Duke of Buckingham harangued the people in favour of Richard; but they were all silent, except a few apprentices, who had been hired for the occasion to applaud. Their acclamations were interpreted into a general wish that Richard should be King, and he was accordingly proclaimed on the 22d of June.

Richard is generally believed to have sent an order for the assassination of his nephews to Brackenbury, Governor of the Tower; he refusing to execute this bloody commission, Sir James Tyrrel was appointed Governor for one night, who smothered them in their beds, and buried them under a staircase. Some writers, especially Buck and Walpole, have doubted these facts, and attempted to exculpate Richard from the accusations of cruelty and tyranny.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

Richard the Third.

1483. RICHARD began his reign by rewarding all his partisans ; but very soon after his coronation the Duke of Buckingham, offended at being refused the Hereford estate, which he laid claim to by descent, conspired with the Bishop of Ely to dethrone Richard and place the Earl of Richmond, at that time a sort of honourable captive in the hands of the Duke of Brittany, on the throne. In order to gain over both factions, they proposed that the Earl should marry Elizabeth, daughter of Edward IV. Henry's mother (married to Lord Stanley) readily agreed to the proposal. Queen Elizabeth, laying aside her hatred of the Lancastrians, likewise consented to give her daughter to Henry, and sent him over money to raise troops.

This could not be carried on so privately but Richard began to suspect something ; on which he ordered the Duke of Buckingham to repair to Court. Instead of obeying the King's command, the Duke raised forces in Wales, meaning to cross the Severn and join his associates in England ; but such torrents of rain had fallen as swelled the rivers to a degree that made it impossible for him to cross them, and his troops, being distressed for provisions, dispersed. Buckingham was then obliged to disguise himself, and lay concealed in the house of an old servant, Bannister, where he was discovered and carried to Richard, who immediately ordered him to be beheaded.

Henry sailed from Brittany with five thousand men. His

fleet was dispersed in a storm, and he arriving on the coast of Cornwall heard of Buckingham's disaster and returned to Brittany.

1484. Richard called a Parliament, and created his son, who was only twelve years of age, Prince of Wales : the young Prince died soon afterwards. Richard passed several popular acts, in the hope of reconciling the people to his usurpation ; but many were every day joining Henry in Brittany, and persuading him to lose no time in making another attempt, particularly as Richard had prevailed on Edward's Queen to leave her sanctuary, and even consent to his marrying her daughter Elizabeth, to obtain a dispensation for which marriage he had sent to Rome.

Richard's wife died about this time, and it was generally believed that she had been poisoned by her husband.

Landais, the Duke of Brittany's minister, intended to deliver up the Earl to Richard ; but the Bishop of Ely informing Richmond of the plot, he fled into France.

1485. Henry embarked at Harfleur with about two thousand men and landed at Milford Haven, where he was soon joined by great numbers, amongst whom was Rice Ap Thomas, a powerful Welsh chieftain. The King and the Earl approached each other ; and at the battle of Bosworth, near Leicester, Richard's army was entirely destroyed and himself slain. During the action Lord Stanley, with his troops, deserted to the Earl of Richmond.

Richard's body was found and carelessly thrown across a horse, carried to Leicester, and buried in the Grey Friars' church without ceremony.

An ornamental crown being found, which Richard wore in the action, Sir William Stanley put it on Henry's head, and the whole army shouted " Long live Henry VII ! "

Richmond's Three Perils.

“ I ’ll read you matter deep and dangerous,
As full of peril and adyenturous spirit
As to o’erwalk a current roaring loud,
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.”

SHAKSPEARE.

Richmond's Three Perils.

THE fatal wars of York and Lancaster, which for nearly half a century deluged England with the blood of the noblest and the bravest in the realm, were occasioned by the conflicting claims of the descendants of two of the sons of Edward the Third to the crown. Henry the Sixth, the reigning monarch, was the great-grandson, by the father's side, of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, the third son of that renowned king; while Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, was descended, by the mother's side, from Lionel, Duke of Clarence, the second son of the same King Edward. Nothing, therefore, could be clearer than the superiority of the Duke of York's title over that of King Henry. Still, with the exceptions of some rebellions, hastily raised and speedily quelled, in the reign of Edward the Fourth, and of a plot detected almost, as soon as it was engendered, and stifled in the blood of its projectors in that of Henry the Fifth, the crown had been enjoyed in peace and uninterrupted quiet by the grandfather and father

of King Henry the Sixth. The prudent and politic administration of the first of those monarchs, and the brilliant military exploits of the second, during his expedition into France, blinded the eyes of the nation to the defects in their title, and it was not until the sceptre was placed in the feeble grasp of an infant of nine months old, and that the realm was distracted by the factions of contending nobles, that the hopes of the House of York began to revive, and its surviving chief, a prince of great talent and valour, and of winning and popular manners, thought of putting forth his pretensions to the splendid inheritance of his ancestors. The general discontent in the nation at the loss of all the French provinces under the new King's reign, which had cost so prodigal an expenditure of blood and treasure during that of his predecessor, materially forwarded the designs of the Duke of York. The Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, and other great nobles, espoused his cause; and at length having got a numerous army, he took the field against the forces of the King, and openly laid claim to the crown of England. It is of course not our purpose to lead our readers into the details of the disastrous events which followed. Numerous battles were fought, unnumbered lives were sacrificed; the competitors

for the royal dignity underwent unheard-of revolutions of fortune ; and Henry and Richard were alternately monarchs and fugitives ; at one time surrounded with all the pomp and circumstance of royalty, and at another desolate, unfriended, and even petitioners for a meal. The death of the Duke of York, who was slain at the battle of Wakefield, seemed to give a decidedly favourable turn to the affairs of King Henry ; and the successes of that day being followed up by the unvaried efforts of his heroic Queen Margaret, he appeared likely to triumph definitively over his foes. The Earl of March, son to the deceased Duke of York, now however assumed the title of King Edward the Fourth ; and being supported warmly by all his father's partisans, and especially by the renowned Earl of Warwick, surnamed the King-maker, he took the field, and at length succeeded in totally defeating the Lancastrians, and making himself master of the person of Henry, whom he committed as a prisoner to the Tower of London. His prosperous fortune was not of long duration ; for having sent the Earl of Warwick as his ambassador to the Court of the King of France, to claim for him in marriage the hand of that monarch's sister-in-law, he nevertheless, while these negotiations were pending,

privately espoused the beautiful Lady Gray, the widow of Sir John Gray of Groby. The reader is already acquainted with the particulars of the Wooing at Grafton. This proceeding exasperated not only the Earl of Warwick, but the King of France, and both persons determined to resent the insult, by espousing the cause of Queen Margaret, the consort of the deposed King, who was then at the Court of France soliciting the aid of Louis on behalf of her captive husband. The Duke of Clarence, King Edward's brother, was also exasperated at what he considered his unworthy marriage, and also joined the Lancastrian faction; the result of all which events was, that in a very short time Henry found himself once more upon the throne of England.

Among the nobles who on this occasion hastened to London to congratulate the restored monarch on his restoration to liberty and power, was Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke. This nobleman being the issue of the marriage of Queen Catherine, the widow of Henry the Sixth, with Owen Tudor, a gentleman of Wales, was consequently half brother to the King. He found the monarch keeping his court in the Tower of London, a place metamorphosed by the events of the last few weeks, from his

dungeon into his palace. The Earl of Pembroke was accompanied by his nephew, a stripling of about thirteen years of age, whom he was anxious to present to his royal master and kinsman. The youth was not tall but was elegantly formed, of a slight and delicate construction of body, with large bright grey eyes, long flowing yellow locks, of a fair and almost pale complexion, and apparently grave and thoughtful beyond his years. The Earl and his nephew had no sooner entered the presence chamber than the eyes of the monarch were instantly rivetted on the lad.

“And who, my Lord of Pembroke,” he asked, “is this fair boy?”

“My liege,” said the Earl, kneeling, “’tis mine and your Highness’s nephew, Henry of Richmond.”

The King gazed more intently than ever on young Richmond, and the courtiers drew into a narrower circle round the throne, and looked anxiously towards the monarch, for they knew by his flashing eye, his glowing features, and the solemn smile which moved his lip, that the spirit of prophecy was upon him.

“I can read the finger of destiny,” he said, “on this fair child’s brow; the volume of futurity is unclasped before me. Henry Tudor, listen to me

Dark and dubious is the vision that comes over me. Peril and strife are mingled with power and glory. I see bolts and fetters and a throne—I see swords and banners and a crown. I hear sighs and wailings and acclamations. Henry Tudor, thou shalt wear the crown of England if thou escapest three perils.”

“And what I pray thee, gracious uncle,” said the boy, kneeling down and kissing the monarch’s hand, “are those three perils?”

The King gazed for a moment wildly and vacantly, then passed his hand across his brow and answered: “A fair wind, a false heart, and a boar’s tusks.”

“Yet tell me somewhat more; let me know more distinctly my destiny, good uncle,” said Richmond.

“’Tis gone, ’tis past,” said the King sinking back in his seat and resuming the usual serene and somewhat apathetic cast of his countenance—“the vision has departed from me; yet be sure, young Henry, that what my lips have this day uttered are the oracles of fate, whose predictions must sooner or later be fulfilled.”

These words sunk deep into the heart and memory of young Richmond, and when years had

rolled over his head they were not forgotten. Each succeeding year, however, seemed to render less and less the probability of the fulfilment of the prediction. Perils, it is true, sufficiently fearful and numerous, environed Henry Tudor, but they were not the perils which the King had foretold; and as to his wearing the crown of England, that for a long time seemed a dream too wild to enter into any sane imagination. While King Henry and his son, who had married the daughter of the Earl of Warwick, lived, there seemed every probability of a long line of successors of the House of Lancaster; and after the murder of the Prince at Tewkesbury, and of the King in the Tower of London, Richmond's chance of mounting the throne appeared to be farther removed than ever; for the House of York seemed firmly established in the regal dignity. Still the dream of power and glory, which the words of the late king had called up, continued to haunt the imagination of Henry Tudor. He was now the last leaf of the Red Rose-Tree, so effectually had its once wide-spreading stalks been thinned by the operation of the sword and the axe. The partisans of that faction still cherished the hope of resuming the ascendancy which they had lost, and looked to Henry as

the pole-star which should guide them once more to wealth and honour.

The Earl of Pembroke, as soon as he received intelligence of the loss of the Battle of Tewkesbury by Queen Margaret, fled with his nephew and a small train of soldiers to Chepstow Castle in Monmouthshire, which he manned and put in as good a posture of defence as his slender resources would enable him. King Edward, who had heard of the late king's prophecy relative to young Richmond, was unceasingly active in endeavouring to get him into his power. He soon discovered the place of Pembroke's retreat, and employed Robert Vaughan, a person of great influence and power in Monmouthshire, to endeavour to entrap the two Earls and send them prisoners. This scheme was, however, discovered by Pembroke before it was thoroughly ripe for execution, and he having contrived to get Vaughan into his power, that unfortunate agent of King Edward was condemned to expiate his treachery by the loss of his head. Pembroke escaped this danger, but he saw that Chepstow was no longer a safe residence for him, as Vaughan was much beloved in that neighbourhood, and the intelligence of his death would soon bring a force too numerous to be resisted to the siege of the castle. He therefore

lost no time in fleeing with his nephew to Pembroke and fortifying the castle of that town. Here, however, the emissaries of the indefatigable Edward followed him ; and a commander of the name of Morgan Thomas, with a formidable army, besieged him and environed the castle with a ditch and a trench, so that his escape thence seemed scarcely possible. After he had been eight days in this critical situation, the arrival of a numerous party of the Earl's friends to his assistance induced Morgan to raise the siege, and Pembroke and Richmond contrived to make their escape to the port of Tenby, where they shortly afterwards took shipping and arrived safely in the territories of the Duke of Brittany.

When it was once known that Richmond had fled into Brittany, such of the Lancastrian lords as had escaped the perils of the field and the scaffold, followed him to his place of refuge, swore fealty to him as their sovereign, and gave some show of dignity and splendour to the little court which he held in the city of Vannes. The Duke of Brittany, a prince of virtue and honour, paid the most delicate and respectful attention to the illustrious refugee, and afforded him and his adherents all the protection which they needed. Being however in close alliance with King Edward the Fourth, to whom

he was indebted for the protection of his dominions against the ambitious projects of the King of France, the Duke would give no support or countenance to Richmond's plots for the invasion of England, and the establishment of himself as the representative of the House of Lancaster on the throne of that country. Edward was very anxious to get the young Earl into his power, and used every effort to induce the Duke of Brittany to give him up to him. He sent secret messengers to the Duke, who promised him great rewards if he would but send both the Earls to England. The Duke heard them with great attention, but when he understood the object of their solicitations, he was only resolved to treat Pembroke and Richmond with greater care and honour than ever. The Duke answered the messengers by saying, that it stood not with his honour to deliver up the two Earls, to whom he was solemnly bound and obliged by his faith and promise; but he promised, that for the King's pleasure, they should be so vigilantly watched, that he need not be under any apprehension of their attempting any thing to his displeasure or prejudice. When the messengers saw that they could not prevail farther with the Duke, they took their leave and returned into England. Edward, immediately on

receiving their report, wrote to Duke Francis, 'lovingly requiring him to accomplish with all speed, that which of his own free motion he had offered ; promising not only to furnish him with men and money, whenever his exigencies should require them ; but yearly to reward him with " a full hand and a well stuffed purse." The Duke seeing that the residence of the two Earls at his court was so productive to him, treated them with increased courtesy and kindness, and was by no means anxious that they should seek for protection elsewhere.

King Edward, afterwards getting involved in a war with the King of France, and feeling assured that the Duke of Brittany would hold inviolate his promise of not giving any countenance to the schemes of the Earls of Pembroke and Richmond against the crown of England, forgot for a while his fears of the young heir of the house of Lancaster. After the conclusion of peace, however, with his foreign adversary, and the total suppression of all domestic commotions, he determined once more to solicit Francis, either by gifts, promises, or prayers, to deliver Richmond into his hands. Francis nevertheless persisted in his determination to keep unbroken the promise of protection which he had made to Henry, although the King had so far deceived him as to induce him

to believe, that in wishing for his presence in England he was actuated by motives of friendship to the Earl, and an anxiety to reconcile the feud between them, by giving him some post of influence and dignity about his person. In this posture of his affairs, Richmond could not but feel and know, that instead of possessing the substance, he was only mocked with the shadow of royalty and power; his happiness, his liberty, his very life, he knew was daily intrigued against by his indefatigable enemy, who then wore the crown; and his only protection against stratagem and violence was his own ever-waking watchfulness, and the honour and integrity of the virtuous, but weak and credulous prince, who had given him shelter in his dominions. "Alas! alas!" he would often exclaim: "Why did I ever listen to this lying prophecy! Why did I suffer myself to be involved in the schemes of the still factious and turbulent, but irretrievably ruined partisans of the House of Lancaster! My father's inheritance, my patrimonial mansion, liberty and peace, had then been mine!"

These bitter reflections formed a melancholy contrast to the brilliant prospect which seemed to be opened before him at the moment that the fateful words fell from King Henry's lips, and on which his

mind's eye, with a strained and anxious gaze, had been constantly fixed for many years. As that hope died away, the very wish which it had engendered seemed to die with it.

“ The sick babe
Drooped at the bosom of the famish'd mother.”

Henry Tudor, whose gaiety and vivacity while that hope existed, had made his little court at Vannes the merriest and sprightliest, if not the most brilliant or most powerful in Europe, now became listless and dispirited, fond of seclusion and solitude, and averse to conversation, especially when the subject was his own pretensions to the diadem of England. Every day brought him intelligence of the increased stability of King Edward's throne, and of the popularity (notwithstanding the sanguinary vengeance taken by him on the party opposed to his elevation to power) which he had gained among all classes of his subjects, by his courteous and graceful manners, his impartial administration of justice, and the splendour and magnificence of his court and household.

It was while the mind of the Earl of Richmond was occupied with these painful considerations, that a portrait of the Princess Elizabeth, the eldest

daughter of King Edward, fell in his way. He was struck by the bewitching beauty of the features, the simplicity and modesty of the mien, and the grace and majesty of the form which were there pourtrayed. He could scarcely believe that these could be any thing more than a lovely dream of the artist's imagination, until he was assured by those who were well acquainted with the fair original, of the astonishing verisimilitude of the portrait. A romantic passion now took possession of his bosom, which banished from it alike the wild and ambitious hopes that he had once entertained, and the bitter disappointment that had followed their apparent frustration. The gratification of that passion seemed even more hopeless than the dreams of empire which he had so long cherished. He determined, however, to make the Princess acquainted with the sentiments which the sight of her portrait had awakened in his bosom. By the agency of Sir John Cheulet, a gallant knight of Brittany, who had taken a great interest in Henry's affairs, and was employed by Duke Francis on a mission at the court of King Edward, the Earl contrived to transmit his own portrait to the Princess, accompanied by a letter in which he declared his passion for her. The portrait was a striking likeness of one of the

most handsome and accomplished persons of the age, and the letter was full of eloquent and passionate pleading. Sir John Cheulet, when he delivered both to the person for whom they were intended, took an opportunity of highly eulogizing the original of the first, and of zealously seconding the petitions of the second. On his return to Brittany, the letter which he placed in the hands of the Earl of Richmond in answer to his own, was such as, notwithstanding the maiden coyness and timidity which it affected, was highly flattering to the hopes of the romantic lover. A correspondence then ensued between Henry and Elizabeth, which discovered such a similarity of taste and feeling, in these two distinguished persons, that the passion which in so extraordinary a manner had sprung up in their bosoms, took a deep and enduring root there, and was confirmed and strengthened by the perusal of each successive epistle.

Hope again lightened the heart of Richmond—joy beamed on his features, and eloquence dwelt upon his lips. Still the means of becoming possessed of the treasure on which his heart was fixed, seemed far removed from him. He knew that he was feared and hated by King Edward and his family, and by all the nobles of the York faction, so that the idea

which had once occurred to him of making an open proffer of his hand to the Princess Elizabeth, was instantly dismissed from his mind. He formed a thousand romantic projects for the purpose of conveying Elizabeth to Brittany. At one time he thought of proceeding to England in disguise, and obtaining an interview with her, when he hoped that they might be able to devise some stratagem for escaping together. At others he conversed with Cheulet, who was a frequent messenger between the King and Duke Francis, on the feasibility of his demanding her from her father as the bride of the latter, and, under that pretext, bringing her over to Brittany. While these schemes occupied his thoughts, he forgot his dreams of empire, and ceased to take those precautions to control the intrigues against his liberty and life, which were constantly employed by the father of the very being of whom he had become enamoured.

Messengers had lately arrived from England on some secret and important mission to the Duke. They had had frequent and long conferences with that prince and his chief minister and favourite Peter Landois, and their looks denoted a degree of satisfaction and success in their negotiations which was generally considered at Vannes to bode no

good to the young Earl of Richmond. "Nay, nay, tell me not, good Cheulet," said Henry to his friend in answer to the affectionate remonstrances of the latter, on the apathy and unconcern with which he treated these ominous appearances—"tell me not of peril and danger. I know the truth and honour of Francis of Brittany, too well to be infected with your suspicions. He would lay his own head on the block, rather than place mine in peril, by delivering me into the hands of my implacable enemy: alas! that I am obliged so to call one whom I would rather designate as my father and my friend."

"My lord!" said Cheulet, "no one doubts the truth and honour of Francis of Brittany; or if there be any who harbour such doubts, John Cheulet is not among the number. But the Duke is of an easy, trusting spirit—and believes the honour and truth of all men to be as invincible as his own. Edward of York too, resembles the tiger as much in his craft and subtlety as in his thirst of blood and ravenousness, and has employed that smooth-tongued priest, Stillingfleet, to win to his designs the unsuspecting Francis."

"Ha!" said Henry turning pale—"is Stillingfleet a party to these negotiations? then am I doom-

ed indeed. To that wily plotter I am well informed that I am indebted for the contrivance and execution of almost all the plots that have been devised for my destruction. But I will hasten to Duke Francis—I will throw myself on his protection, and bid him beware how he trusts either the crafty doctor, or the dissembling tyrant by whom he is employed.”

“Then lose no time, my lord,” said Cheulet; “the moments are precious, and it is whispered about the court, that ere the evening closes in, you are to proceed to St. Maloes on your way to England.”

At that moment the door of the apartment flew open, and the Duke of Brittany entered, attended by Peter Landois and accompanied by Stillingfleet and the two other ambassadors from England. “Welcome, fair cousin!” he said, extending his hand to Richmond. “I would fain exchange a few words with you on a matter which touches you nearly.”

“I am your Grace’s attentive and grateful auditor,” said Richmond coldly.

“Talk not of gratitude, fair cousin,” said the Duke; “for the poor asylum which our dominions have afforded to the princely Earl of Richmond—

an asylum too of which he stood not in need, for neither dangers nor enemies threatened him. We have received a gracious message, my good lord, from our royal cousin and ally, King Edward, who craves us of our love both to him and to thee to expedite thy return to England."

"And your Grace's reply," said Richmond, "is doubtless that——"

"That so convinced," interrupted the Duke, "are we of his Highness's good intentions and friendly disposition towards you, that you will this day proceed with the good Dr. Stillingfleet to St. Maloes, where a vessel is in readiness to convey you to your native land."

"Duke Francis," said the Earl, "I conjure you, as you would not have the blood of the innocent upon your soul, not to consent to this most cruel and treacherous deed. King Edward is my implacable foe, and I know that as soon as my foot is planted on English ground—ay, as soon as it has touched the deck of an English vessel, the days of Henry Tudor are numbered. I am in your Grace's hands; the far famed honour and probity of Francis of Brittany made me without hesitation place myself in them. I knew not that in so doing I was yielding my neck to the bloodthirsty knife of Edward of York."

"My gracious Lord," said Stillingfleet, advancing with that look of deep humility and reverence, mingled with candour and kindness which long practice had taught him so easily to assume ; " your Lordship much mistakes and wrongs my royal master. His Highness has long wished to terminate the disastrous factions by which the kingdom is agitated—to blend the White Rose in peace and charity with the Red, and to number Henry of Lancaster among his nearest and dearest relatives and friends. Accident made him acquainted with the secret of a correspondence between your Lordship and the Princess Elizabeth."

Henry started at these words, the blood rushed for a moment to his brow, and then retreating from it as suddenly as it had advanced, left it as pale as marble.

" Accident, my good Lord," continued Stillingfleet, wearing a smile of raillery upon his features, and not appearing to notice the agitation which his words had occasioned,— "made him acquainted with that secret. The joy which animated his princely heart was unbounded—the project which for many long years had been formed in his own mind, seemed to have grown up simultaneously in yours, and I am now the humble bearer of his Highness's invita-

tion to your Lordship, to proceed forthwith to the country from which you have been too long an exile, and to consummate that mutual affection which has so auspiciously sprung up in your heart and in that of the lovely princess."

"Ha!" said Henry mentally, "dare I in my heart believe the flattering tale? That were, indeed, a mode by which alike this passion that disturbs my heart might be gratified and the prophecy of King Henry fulfilled. If, good Doctor," he said, turning to Stillingfleet, "I dared believe—"

"If! my Lord," said the priest, while his eye seemed to glow with the fires of insulted probity and honour. "Doubt you the plighted truth of King Edward?—doubt you the faith of one who is a humble but sincere servant of the cross?—doubt you the guarantee which is afforded to you by the honour and virtue of this princely Duke Francis of Brittany, whose reputation for unsullied honour and spotless integrity—"

"It is enough, it is enough, Doctor," said the Earl; "for the love which I bear to Elizabeth of York, I would encounter a greater peril than now awaits me. I am prepared to take the journey to St. Maloes."

"Within three hours then," said Stillingfleet, "we shall be ready to escort your Lordship."

“The sooner, friends, the better,” said Richmond, bowing to the ambassadors, and then taking a cordial and grateful leave of the Duke, he retired to prepare himself for his journey.

So infatuated was the heart of Richmond by the influence of the passion with which it was now possessed, that the removal to England, which had formerly seemed to him to be only walking into his grave, was now an event which was but too remote from him. The three hours which he had to wait before he was to proceed on his journey, seemed an age of cruel and melancholy procrastination. The three ambassadors, in the mean time, were as anxious as he to be perfectly ready to take their departure by the time that those three hours had expired ; and had the young Earl seen the dark glances which they exchanged, and heard the half-uttered malignity and triumph of their hearts, the complacency with which he regarded his approaching removal to the shore of his nativity would have been considerably diminished. These circumstances did not pass unobserved by his friend Sir John Cheulet, but were vigilantly noticed by him, and made an impression on his mind which fully confirmed the opinion that he had previously cherished of King Edward's insincere and treacherous intentions. He, therefore,

determined to accompany his friend on the first stage of his journey, in the hope of being able to discover from the conduct of Stillingfleet and his associates such decided indications of their master's motive in getting the person of the Earl into his power, as would, when communicated to the Duke of Brittany, induce that Prince to issue a revocation of the permission which he had granted for the departure of Richmond from his dominions. The Knight's determination was wrought by two most powerful motives—his sincere affection and friendship for Henry, and his devoted loyalty to the Duke his master. Should the Earl be made a sacrifice to the jealous fears of King Edward, the Duke of Brittany would, he feared, be considered an accomplice in the crime, and lose that reputation for integrity and honour which he enjoyed throughout all Europe.

The evening on which the Earl of Richmond departed from Vannes to St. Maloes, in the company of the three ambassadors, Sir John Cheulet, and about a dozen attendants, was dark and lowering. A day, not it is true of splendour and brightness, but of tranquillity and peace, seemed about to be succeeded by a night of turbulence and danger. Those red lurid clouds were gathering in the west which so often precede a storm, and which seem by

their unnatural glow to mock the blackness which is to follow them. As Henry gazed upon these appearances, a feeling of ominous dread took possession of his mind, and he could not help considering them as typical of his impending fate. "Although," thought he, "I have not been living in magnificence at Vannes, I have enjoyed safety and liberty. These, lured by promises as brilliant and flattering as yon gorgeous clouds which but predict the coming storm, I am about to exchange for troubles and dangers, before which my heart tells me that all my anxious hopes and dreams of power and pleasures will pass away as certainly and as speedily as the gossamers, which are sporting in the beams of the setting sun, will be driven before the breath of the tempest that is even now gathering around them."

Sir John Cheulet, who accompanied his friend on the first stage of what he continued to consider this fatal journey, observed the mental anxiety which agitated him. "Henry Tudor," he said, "in an evil hour did you consent to place yourself in the power of these men, the agents of a tyrant as base and perfidious as themselves. Observe you not the air of malignant triumph with which this Stillingfleet regards you. See, too, the cloud which is now

gathering on his brow at the close conversation which we are holding."

Henry as he turned his eyes towards this person, felt all his worst fears confirmed. The features which, in the presence of the Duke of Brittany, were composed to an expression of the most saintly and apostolical character, now wore the moody malignant look of the assassin. He was seen frequently to grasp his dagger, and half unsheathing it return it violently and impatiently into his belt. Occasionally dark and gloomy looks, followed by anxious whisperings, were exchanged between him and his two colleagues; while at times an obstreperous laugh burst from his lips as he eyed his charge, or rather his prisoner, with a look of familiarity and even of contempt, that ill accorded with the deference due to the rank and character of the Earl of Richmond.

"Sweet Earl," said Cheulet as they arrived at that part of the road on which it had been agreed that he should retrace his steps to Vannes, then distant about six hours' journey; "here must I leave you. In the mean time, be wary and be watchful, and should any opportunity of escaping out of the clutches of these men present itself, hesitate not to take advantage of it. For me, immediately on my

return to Vannes, I will make the good Duke Francis fully acquainted with my suspicions, and trust to be able to induce him to prevent your embarkation with these incarnate fiends for England. While this wind lasts you will be safe upon the shores of Brittany, but as soon as it proves fair for your native country, this Stillingfleet will hurry you on board."

"Ha!" said Richmond as a sudden pang shot across his brow; "it is the first peril, *a fair wind*, which King Henry prophesied that I should be doomed to encounter. Brave Cheulet, pity me—help me!—remain at least by my side, that I may have one faithful heart to advise and sympathise with me."

"Noble Henry," said the knight, grasping his friend's hand, "gladly, most gladly would I share your peril, but I think that I can more effectually aid you by hastening to communicate my suspicions to the Duke. This storm," he added, looking up to the black sky, illuminated at intervals by the forked lightnings, "is your best protection against the danger of an immediate embarkation. Before it is over, I trust to rejoin you at St. Maloes, and to be the bearer of the Duke's commands for your immediate return to Vannes. Farewell! farewell!" added

the gallant knight shaking the hand of his friend ; “be hopeful but be wary.” Thus saying he put spurs to his horse, and with the velocity of the lightning that was flashing over his head, he retraced his steps towards Vannes.

With a bold heart, an iron frame, and an untiring steed, Sir John Cheulet held on his way amidst the storm undaunted. The flashing of the lightnings, the roaring of the thunder, the torrents of rain which inundated his path, and above all, the strong westerly wind and almost hurricane, against which he and his courser had to strain with all their might ; these accompaniments of his journey, which to a traveller under ordinary circumstances would have been matter of fear and lamentation, were hailed with the most heartfelt satisfaction by the knight, as assurances of the continued safety of the Earl of Richmond. His road lay for the most part through a large forest, and here as the lightnings at intervals illuminated his path, he saw the trees splitting beneath the forked flash, and when darkness again involved him, he heard them as with tremendous crashes their roots yielded to the influence of the whirlwind, which stretched the monarchs of the forest on the plain. Sometimes during the pauses of the storm, when the wind sunk into a low shrill

murmur, he thought that he could hear the shrieks of travellers in the distance, whom the tempest had overwhelmed, and knew not but that in a moment their fate would be his own. His horse, however, seemed to share the devotedness of its gallant rider to the cause which he had espoused, and as both were well acquainted with the road through the forest, they escaped the disasters which on that night befel many less experienced travellers. As the morning dawned the storm was somewhat abated in its violence. The lightning and the thunder ceased, and the rain descended less rapidly and copiously. Still the wind, Chénuel's grand ally in the enterprise which he had undertaken, blew from the same quarter and with the same violence, and as at about the hour of six in the morning he presented himself at the gate of the Ducal palace, he hailed as a happy omen the tremendous force with which it swept through the street of Vannes, and gave to its usually populous and busy thoroughfares the appearance of a deserted city.

The Duke had passed a restless and uneasy night. The violence of the storm had combined, with some internal misgivings as to the sincerity of Edward's professions of friendship towards the Earl, to rob him of his accustomed rest. He had therefore risen

early, and was seated in his library, endeavouring by the perusal of a favourite author, to chase away the gloom which overshadowed his mind, when Sir John Cheulet stood before him. The knight's garments were soiled with dirt and rain; the lightning had glanced upon his helmet and left traces of its visit there; and panting for breath and leaning upon his sword, he exhibited very intelligible signs of the rapid and uneasy journey which he had made. As he raised his visor and made his obeisance to the Duke, the latter observed his pale and troubled countenance and the agitation and dejectedness of his manner.

"Why, how now, good Sir John?" he asked. "What means this sad and frowning countenance? Wherefore those sighs, and to what strange chance am I indebted for a visit from you at so unwonted an hour as this?"

"Most noble and redoubted Lord," answered Cheulet, "this pale face and these deadly looks prognosticate that the time of my death is near at hand, and I would to Heaven that it had approached before this day! Had I died before, I should have escaped the shame and sorrow occasioned by an act which you have done, which I had not thought it possible for you to do, and by which I feel myself

doomed either to an early grave or to a life of perpetual misery. You, my singular good lord," he added, sinking on his knee and grasping the Duke's hands in his own with a passionate earnestness, "you by your virtuous acts and noble feats have achieved an immortal fame; your praise is on every lip, your blessing is breathed from every heart. But now, alas! it seems (I pray you pardon me my boldness) that you begin to be weary of your great name, and having won such high and distinguished honours, you care not to maintain them inviolate and unimpaired."

"What means this, Cheulet?" said the Duke, rising from his seat and turning from the knight with a look of mingled sorrow and displeasure. "You presume too much on my kindness and forbearance."

"It means, gracious Sovereign," said Sir John Cheulet, catching hold of the Duke's robe as he was retiring from the apartment, "that you, forgetting your faith and promise made to Henry Earl of Richmond, have delivered that most innocent young gentleman into the hands of his enemies, to be imprisoned, tortured, and slain; wherefore, all who love you, and of whom I am one, cannot but mourn and lament when they see openly the fame and glory of

your most renowned name tarnished with the reproach of disloyalty and treachery."

"Good Cheulet," said the Duke, "of what is it that you accuse me? Henry Tudor placed himself voluntarily in the hands of that most reverend and excellent father, renowned alike for piety and learning, Stillingfleet."

"He did so, most gracious Lord, in consequence of a fair but treacherous promise, sworn to with all solemnity and fervour, but which he would nevertheless not have trusted to, but for the protection and guarantee of your most princely word. That promise will be broken, and young Richmond's blood will be spilt."

"Peace, peace! Sir John," said the Duke: "I will tell thee that no such chance can happen to the Earl, for King Edward has required him at my hands, for the purpose of transforming his suspected enemy to his fair and loving son-in-law. Is it possible to give a more decisive testimony of his affection and good will?"

"Believe me, my good Lord," said the Knight shaking his head mournfully, "that Earl Henry is on the brink of perdition. Permit him to set one foot out of your Grace's territory, and there is no

mortal creature who will be able to save him from death."

"Thou movest me even to tears, good Cheulet," said the Duke much agitated and affected. "Heaven knows that I would rather lay my own grey hairs upon the block, than see one on the head of Henry Tudor injured. Yet I have plighted my word to the King of England; I have delivered the Earl into the hands of his ambassadors, and dare not but at the risk of involving my Duchy in a sanguinary and unequal war, recede from the step which I have taken. But here comes my chief treasurer, Peter Landois: he is skilled in management and policy, and by his advice will I be governed."

The chief treasurer was a man somewhat passed the middle period of life, but retaining all the vigour and activity of earlier years; under whose wise and politic counsels the little Duchy of Britany had within a few years attained to an unprecedented heighth of prosperity and power. He was a short, thin, and apparently care-worn man; premature grey hairs had gathered on his head, and his step was feeble and tremulous; but his quick flashing grey eye, his haughty and imperious brow, and the careless and confident smile on his lip, indicated a mind whose strength and activity more than com-

pensated for the feebleness of the body. Cheulet, at the command of the Duke, laid before him all his fears and suspicions of the insincerity of King Edward; described his journey with Richmond and the ambassadors, and told him of the young Earl's own conviction, that the English monarch had determined on his destruction. "The honour of Duke Francis," said the Treasurer, after having listened attentively to the Knight's discourse, "like that of Cæsar's wife, must not even be suspected; therefore the departure of the Earl must be prevented, for Edward's views towards him appear suspicious and insincere. Still must not the safety of Britany be compromised by any violence or offence offered to the King of England and his ambassadors. Will my gracious Sovereign leave this matter to my management?"

"Most willingly, good Landois," said the Duke, "with a thousand thanks for relieving me from a weary burden."

"Then must this gallant Knight," said the Treasurer, "be prepared to accompany me within two hours to St. Maloes."

"'Tis but a brief time in which to recruit my weary strength," said Cheulet, "but the life and death of the Earl of Richmond depend upon the

celerity of our efforts in his behalf. I will attend you at the hour appointed."

In the mean time the unfortunate Henry became more and more convinced that he had been delivered up as a sheep to the slaughter. The change of demeanor on the part of Dr. Stillingfleet became still more strongly marked after the departure of Sir John Cheulet had deprived the Earl of the only companion in whom he could repose the slightest confidence. The mild, reverend, and courteous manner of the priest, was exchanged for the reckless and daring, but at the same time cold, cautious, and suspicious air of the leader of a banditti. Henry was for some time absorbed in the painful mental occupation which his own thoughts afforded him, and when he roused himself from his reverie, he found that he was riding abreast of two of the attendants, who had insensibly and by degrees narrowed the respectful distance at which they had kept behind him, and now stationed one on each side of him, they looked more like companions or gaolers than attendants. The three ambassadors, each followed by a retainer, rode before him, and five or six men with drawn swords in their hands followed in his rear. The storm which raged around them was unheeded and unfelt by Henry,

so much more violent and appalling was that which agitated his bosom. Often did he internally reproach the Duke of Britany with weakness, folly, and even perfidy, for having allowed him to leave Vannes; and as often did he curse his own idle and romantic affection, as having been the prime agent of his destruction. Then whenever his fellow-travellers congratulated themselves on any apparent relaxation of the fury of the storm, did he internally pray that it might increase to tenfold vehemence, so that no vessel might be able to live upon those fatal waters which he felt conscious would only bear him to the dungeon or the block.

The priest Stillingfleet, with his attendants and his prisoner, reached St. Maloes at about the same hour that Sir John Cheulet had arrived at Vannes. "The foul fiend himself makes war against us," he cried, as he saw his vessel idly anchored in the harbour and beheld the ocean tossing and foaming in the adverse gale. "Will this infernal wind never subside? To the castle, to the castle! Since we cannot embark, the time may be worse employed than in taking that rest of which we stand so much in need."

To the castle, therefore, did they proceed, where the governor on Stillingfleet presenting to him the

credentials with which he was furnished by the Duke of Britany, readily admitted them, and provided for their accommodation. Richmond was ushered into a large and lofty apartment, at one end of which was a couch, and at the other a blazing fire. Having partaken of the refreshments offered him, and warmed himself at the blaze of the fire, he was preparing to throw himself on the couch with a wearied frame and a mind but ill at ease, when Sir Richard Brackley, a Judge of the Court of King's Bench, and Sir Thomas Vaughan, a Knight of the Bath, Stillingfleet's associates in the embassy, entered the apartment, and drawing two chairs close to the fire took their seats there, and appeared to be composing themselves to repose.

"What means this intrusion, gentlemen," said Richmond. "I was about to retire to my couch for the purpose of taking some rest previous to the embarkation."

"And we are but doing the same, young Sir," said Brackley, a gaunt and gigantic person, whose features were now distorted by a smile ghastly as that which the poet has ascribed to the last great enemy, "we who, forsooth! stand as much in need of rest as you, having, besides encountering the storm, been obliged to watch you very narrowly lest you

should attempt to escape. Trust me, that your conferences with the Breton knight were not altogether unobserved."

"Escape!" said Henry. "I knew not until now that I was a prisoner, and a prisoner alone can have any wish or motive to escape. I thought myself under the protection of the ambassadors of my cousin King Edward, whose royal word is a sufficient pledge of my freedom and safety."

"Ay! ay!" said Brackley, with a diabolical grin, "you are safe enough; but not perhaps quite so free as you supposed. The King too will take as much care of you when you land in England as we do here, although, perhaps, his guardianship may not last quite so long as ours seems likely to do. The road," he added, addressing his companion, and speaking in a tone which was but indistinctly audible to Richmond, "from the Tower to Tower Hill is not quite as long as that from St. Maloes to London."

Vaughan shrugged his shoulders, grinned, and gave a nod of assent; while Brackley, after giving utterance to an obstreperous laugh, leaned back in his chair, and once more composed himself to slumber.

"For Heaven's sake! Sir," said Richmond, ap-

proaching Vaughan, "what am I to understand by this man's language and behaviour? Your golden spurs proclaim you to belong to one of those orders of chivalry in which none are enrolled but gentlemen of valour, honour, and courtesy. Tell me why is the privacy of my apartment intruded upon, and whether I am a prisoner or a free man?"

Vaughan turned his head towards the Earl, but did not move from his recumbent posture in the chair. His features did not exhibit the same expression of profligacy and malignity which characterised those of Brackley; but there was an air of dogged and mulish indifference, which was at least as fatal to any hope which had sprung up in the mind of Richmond of his being able to awaken his sympathy and compassion.

"Young gentleman," said Vaughan, "take an old man's advice for once. Whatever may be your future fate, present rest and refreshment can do you no harm. As soon as the wind changes and becomes fair for England, which the sailors say will be in a few hours, you must embark. Therefore to your couch! to your couch! While you are under my care you need not entertain any apprehensions of either treachery or violence."

Richmond's heart sunk within him as he felt all his

worst fears confirmed by the conduct and language of these two men who now openly assumed the office of his gaolers. Still the advice of Vaughan seemed proper to be followed, as, whatever might be his future trials, rest would be necessary to enable him to meet them with becoming dignity and firmness. With a disturbed and anxious spirit therefore, but a wearied and worn-out frame, he threw himself on the couch and soon sunk into a profound slumber.

For above eight hours his rest was undisturbed except by the dreams of peril and trouble which his imagination conjured up before him. Sometimes he fancied that he had fallen from the deck of a vessel into the sea, that King Edward rescued him from a watery grave by drawing him by the hair of his head on to the deck again : then in a voice of thunder exclaiming, " behold the head of a traitor ! " he threw him down on a block, and was about to decollate him with his sword, when the scene suddenly changed, and a new illusion took possession of his senses. At another time he imagined that he was walking in the gardens of the palace at Westminster by the banks of the river Thames. On one side towered the venerable Abbey, whose pinnacles seemed to soar into the deep blue sky above them, and blend and mingle with that heaven to whose service

they were devoted ; while in the opposite distance rose in many a gentle elevation the fair hills of Surry, on which the sunbeams fell in many a long line of glory. Elizabeth of York was walking by his side, but while he was listening and gazing delighted with the music of her voice, and the beauty of her form and features, she suddenly drew a dagger from her bosom and sheathed it in his heart. At another time he was walking in the midst of the beautiful scenery which environed his own residence in the city of Vannes. An unusual placidity and calmness possessed his soul, and his step was as buoyant and elastic as if he had never felt pain or known sorrow, when suddenly he imagined himself to be surrounded by a number of soldiers, who by their white uniforms he knew to be in the service of the King of England, and who seizing his arms shook him so violently that he started from his sleep. He then, on attempting to move from his couch, found himself in the rough grasp of Sir Richard Brackley, who exclaimed in a harsh and discordant tone of voice—"Up, up ! the wind is fair : Sir Thomas Vaughan is already on board, and Dr. Stillingfleet and myself are only waiting for you. Quick, despatch, too much time has been lost already ; a very few hours will now suffice to land us on the coast of England."

“Now gracious God!” exclaimed Henry in an agony of fear, sinking on his knees, “thou who didst endue Henry of Windsor with the spirit of prophecy, and whose watchful Providence has till now guarded and protected me, save me, I beseech thee, from the peril, from this fair wind which will only waft me to destruction.”

“Despatch, despatch! young Sir,” said Brackley; “what art thou muttering there?—thou canst pray on board, and do good service to us all by petitioning for a continuance of that auspicious wind which is now blowing strongly towards the shores of merry England.”

With a heavy heart and reluctant step, Henry prepared himself for the journey, and followed Brackley as his iron step echoed heavily on the winding staircase by which they descended to the postern of the castle. Here they emerged into the open air, and had scarcely crossed the drawbridge before they saw Stillingfleet in earnest and somewhat angry conversation with some persons, who appeared from their soiled garments and the jaded condition of the steeds from which they had dismounted, to have just arrived from a long and hurried journey. As they approached these newcomers they recognized Cheulet, Landois, and two attendants.

The Knight and his companions had used all speed in prosecuting their journey from Vannes to St. Maloes. As the former retraced his steps on the road which he had traversed the previous night, he observed, with a failing heart, that the storm had greatly diminished, and that the wind, although still somewhat adverse for England, was evidently veering round to an opposite point. "Sir John ! Sir John !" said Landois, " I fear that our exertions will but little avail the unfortunate Earl of Richmond. The wind will be fair for England before we can reach St. Maloes."

" Our cause is just, our steeds good, and there is a Heaven above us, Master Landois," said Cheulet. " I will not despair until I arrive at St. Maloes, and see the English masts blending with the sky on the very verge of the horizon."

" That stout heart of thine, Sir John Cheulet, has often rolled back the tide of war and made the breath of victory blow from a different quarter to that whence it seemed at first to proceed, but it cannot turn the tide of the English Channel or bid the Eastern breeze veer to the West."

Sir John only answered the Chancellor by spurring his steed more hotly, and his zeal was eagerly seconded by Landois and the two attendants ; and

at length, as we have already seen, they arrived at St. Maloes at the very moment that Stillingfleet and the Earl were about to embark.

The priest eyed the new comers with a severe glance, but his features brightened when he saw that they were only four in number. His mind instantly suggested to him that the Duke had sent to command him not to allow the Earl to embark; a command, however, which he was determined not to obey. "The Earl must proceed to England, gentlemen, forthwith," he said, before Landois and Cheulet had had time to unfold to him the purport of their visit.

"Doubtless, good Doctor, he must," said Landois. "You have the Duke's authority to that effect, but my princely master has a secret communication to make to the Earl before his embarkation, of which Sir John Cheulet is the bearer; you will therefore, be pleased to allow the Earl and the Knight a few minutes private conversation."

"Well, well," said Stillingfleet, "let the communication be brief. The wind is at length fair, and we must not lose the precious moments. Sir John Cheulet, the Earl and you may walk aside for a few minutes, that you may have an opportunity of informing him of these private (if private they must be) commands of Duke Francis."

“Reverend Father,” said Cheulet, “a very short time will enable me to intrust the Duke’s secret to the Earl. By the time that we have walked to the porch of yonder cathedral,” pointing to a spire at the distance of about a hundred yards, “and retraced our steps to this place, I shall have said all that I have to say to the Earl of Richmond.”

“Be it so,” said Stillingfleet; “and you will take it not amiss if three of my people follow you at a convenient distance, where they cannot be privy to your conversation, but may prevent any attempt at robbing me of the precious charge with which Duke Francis has intrusted me.”

The Knight bowed in token of acquiescence. The Earl with an anxious but doubting heart took his friend’s arm. He had hoped, that if Cheulet arrived in St. Maloes before the embarkation, he would have been accompanied by such a force as would have enabled him to rescue him from the clutches of Stillingfleet; but now he and his friends, even supposing Landois willing to assist in his rescue, were only five, and opposed to fifteen enemies. Cheulet, however, whispered to him to be of good cheer, and they proceeded towards the cathedral, followed by Stillingfleet’s three retainers.

In the mean time, Landois was engaged in earnest

conversation with the ambassadors, and it was evident from the gestures of the latter, that the conversation was no longer of a nature unpleasing to them. Smiles brightened the smooth seraphic face of Stillingfleet, enlivened the dull apathetic countenance of Vaughan, and even somewhat softened the ferocious expression of Brackley's features. Landois, a perfect master in the science of dissimulation, had won the attention and lulled the suspicions of the Englishmen. By praising the priest's character for eloquence and sanctity, and expressing his own conviction of his ultimately obtaining a cardinal's hat, if not the triple crown; by extolling the prowess of the knight, and lifting up his hands and eyes in admiration of the lawyer's learning and acuteness, he made all three forget for a short, but nevertheless sufficiently long period, the importance of the charge with which they were entrusted. At length, however, turning his eyes towards the path which the Earl and his companion had taken, Stillingfleet saw his own three followers standing at the church porch, but Henry and the Knight had disappeared.

"Death and destruction!" he exclaimed to those of his attendants who were near him, "where is the Earl of Richmond,—where is Sir John Cheulet?"

"They have entered the cathedral, sir," said one, "and the men whom you appointed to follow them are keeping close watch at the porch till they come out again."

"Ye blind slaves! ye drivelling idiotic villains!" shrieked Stillingfleet, wringing his hands; "they have taken sanctuary!"

"Say ye so!" said Vaughan, "then with as much celerity as they took it, will I take it from them;" and drawing his sword, he was proceeding towards the cathedral, when both Stillingfleet and Landois interposed.

"It must not be," said the priest crossing himself; "the privileges of holy sanctuary must be respected, though even the red hand of the murderer sought refuge there. But you, my Lord Landois, how will you and your master answer this treachery to the King. In his name do I denounce a fearful vengeance and retribution against the ruler, and the dominions of Brittany."

"Sir," said Landois, affecting the utmost indignation and surprise, "your priestly character protects you, else (touching his sword) should not an aspersion upon my honour, and still less upon that of my prince, go for a single instant unpunished. I see," he said, bending a look of deference

and respect on the priest's colleagues, "that this gallant knight and this most learned judge do not join in your unworthy suspicions; and I hope, reverend doctor, that a moment's reflection will induce you to banish them from your mind. This Breton Knight, who is the Earl's especial friend, and seems to entertain some idle and groundless doubts of the King's sincerity, has persuaded Henry Tudor to take sanctuary. The laws of God and man alike forbid us to violate the security of that place, in which he has chosen to seek shelter."

"I doubt not the good Chancellor's honour," said Brackley, "or that of his princely sovereign; it were an ill requital of Duke Francis's courtesy and kindness towards us, to load him with an unjust suspicion."

"But the prize for which I have been so long toiling," exclaimed Stillingfleet, "is ravished from my grasp. The money and merchandize which we have expended on this enterprise have been lavished in vain."

"Say not so, good Doctor," returned Landois; "neither your time nor your treasure have been expended unavailingly. You have won the respect and affection of all who have had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with you in Britany, and when

the time shall come, as it must speedily, when those high honours in the Church, to which you are so well entitled, shall be not far removed from your grasp, fear not that the exertions of your friends in this Duchy shall be wanting to place them effectually within your reach."

"You are a fair spoken man," said the Priest, somewhat softened by the Chancellor's flattering address, and before whose imagination, ever teeming with ambitious dreams, archbishops' mitres, cardinals' hats, and the triple crown floated on one wide sea of progressive grandeur and power. "You are a fair spoken person, and I have not yet found your actions to be darker than your words. King Edward, however, must be satisfied that we have not left his affairs in this Duchy worse than we found them. Promise me that Duke Francis will continue to watch with the same vigilance as formerly over the intrigues of this young Earl and his uncle, and that no plots against the crown and dignity of King Edward shall be carried on in his dominions."

"I have authority," said Landois, "to pledge the Duke's most solemn oath and promise to that effect."

"Then," said Stillingfleet, giving the chancellor his hand, "let us part in peace—the wind is fair, and we must away."

“ Fare thee well, reverend father, and my most esteemed friend,” said Landois, “ and gallant Vaughan, and learned Brackley, fare ye well! The Earl shall be kept so narrowly watched at the Duke’s court, that ye shall have no more cause of fear from him than from his shadow.”

The ambassadors then proceeded to embark. The wind blowing strongly soon carried them out of the harbour into the open sea, and Richmond escaped his first peril.

In the city of Vannes, and under the protection of the Duke of Britany, again did Henry Tudor find shelter and peace, but his hopes of love and glory seemed farther removed from him than ever. King Edward wrote to Duke Francis, expressing his regret that his kinsman had hesitated to visit him, and disavowing the most remote intention of committing any violence upon his liberty or life. The princess wrote to Richmond, expressing the same regret, but assuring him of her unaltered constancy and love. Landois, in the mean time, upon whom in consequence of the Duke’s age, his growing infirmities, and his disinclination to take any active share in public business, the chief management of the affairs of Britany devolved, carried on secret correspondence with England, which Richmond, not-

withstanding the important service that the Chancellor had rendered him, could not help suspecting boded no good to him. Sir John Cheulet confirmed him in these suspicions, and assured him that Landois, acute and naturally kind-hearted and generous as he was, could not resist the all-potent influence of gold. "Danger or difficulty would not frighten him from your side," the knight would say, "but King Edward's money bags are enemies against which I would advise you to guard yourself."—King Edward, however, was soon gathered to his fathers, and his infant son mounted the throne. Richmond's hopes now began to revive. The nation seemed to be impatient of the sway of a child, and were also fearful of the character of the King's uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, who was made Protector, and who was suspected not only of having been guilty of the murder of the late King Henry the Sixth, and of his son, but also of that of his own brother the Duke of Clarence. The events which followed are familiar to all the readers of English history. The young King, and his brother the Duke of York, died suddenly in the Tower of London, not without suspicions of having been murdered by their uncle. The Duke of Gloucester was proclaimed King under the title of Richard the

Third ; and having quietly obtained possession of the throne, bent all the energies of his powerful mind to the destruction of the only person who advanced an adverse claim to the regal dignity, Henry Earl of Richmond. King Richard too attacked Richmond on a still tenderer point. He made love to the Princess Elizabeth his niece, persuaded her mother, the Queen Dowager, to advocate his suit, and sent messengers to Rome for the purpose of soliciting from the Pope a dispensation to enable him to marry his brother's daughter.

Richmond, however, received letters from Elizabeth, assuring him of her unshaken attachment to him, and avowing her determination to die rather than wed the murderer of her brothers. These assurances quieted the Earl's anxiety on the score of his affection, but he still found, or fancied, his liberty and life placed in jeopardy, and was obliged to watch with the utmost suspicion and caution the movements of a man whom he had fondly hoped he might number among his friends, Peter Landois. "His, surely," he would say to himself, "is the *false heart* of which King Henry prophesied." Couriers were continually running, and letters passing between King Richard and the Chancellor, and messengers, who appeared, to be charged with some

secret and important mission from the former, arrived in the city of Vannes. Landois too kept a state, and spent money with a profusion which it was evident that the emoluments attached to the office which he held in so poor a Duchy as Britany, could not be sufficient to support.

One day, while Richmond was moodily brooding over these ill-omened appearances, Sir John Cheulet broke in upon his privacy, leading by the hand a person whose dress and language denoted that he was an ecclesiastic and an Englishman.

“A messenger, my Lord of Richmond,” said Cheulet, “from your firm friend and ally, Morton, Bishop of Ely—Sir Christopher Urswick.”

“Ha !” said Richmond, moving towards his new visitor ; “I have often heard my friend Morton and others, for whom I have an equal regard, speak highly of the virtues and talents of Sir Christopher Urswick. But how fares the Bishop?”

“As well, my Lord,” said Urswick, “as exile and penury, and his grief, that your progress towards obtaining the diadem of England is not more rapid, will permit him to fare. He continues friendless and penniless, but still safe from the malice of his enemies in his humble sojourn in Flanders ; but he blesses God for all the privations which he has

been there obliged to undergo, since they have made him acquainted with the details of a horrible plot against your liberty and life."

"Say on, say on, good Urswick: I have often been indebted to my Lord of Ely for his timely intelligence."

"This very night, my Lord," continued the priest, "has the traitor Landois engaged to deliver you up to the emissaries of King Richard. Every servant in this palace is corrupted, except your page Seymour; and at the hour of midnight, the conspirators will be admitted into your bedchamber; you will be seized and gagged, hurried to the scene of your old danger, St. Maloes, and thence transported to England. Seymour, who is hated for his attachment to you, will at the same time be banished to France; lest, while in Britany, he should communicate the particulars of this scheme to Duke Francis, and so shake the estimation in which Landois stands with his prince."

"Can I believe it?" said Richmond. "To this very Peter Landois I am already indebted for my life, and it seems worse than ingratitude to believe him guilty of treachery against the being whom he has once preserved."

"Believe him not, trust him not," said Urswick;

"his interests stood not in his way when he last assisted your escape from danger ; but now the gold of England has made him your inveterate enemy : for one tithe of the silver marks which, as my Lord of Ely has discovered, have been shipped over to him from London, he would barter his own salvation to the great enemy of mankind."

"What would you have me do, good Urswick?" asked Henry.

"Fly from the city," answered the priest, "and that without delay."

"And whither can I fly?" said Richmond ; "I have neither friends nor allies nor favourers, beyond the city of Vannes."

"You must fly into France," said Urswick ; "the frontier of that kingdom is not above twelve hours' hard riding from this place ; there will you meet my Lord of Ely, and your noble uncle, the Earl of Pembroke, who, immediately on receiving intelligence of this plot, hastened to the Court of King Charles at Langes on the Loire, to solicit that monarch's permission for you to take up your residence in his territories, while they despatched me to you to urge your immediate flight. There is little doubt but that they will obtain, and meet you on the frontier with, the permission which they have begged. Lose therefore no time ; when once you are upon

the French soil, Landois, though he had twenty thousand men at his heels, dare not follow you an inch farther."

"'Tis now the hour of eight," said Richmond, "and in twelve hours thou sayest that we may reach the frontier. Yet I must be wary, since I am surrounded by spies and traitors, nor let them know that the journey on which I am proceeding is towards France. My friend, Sir Eustace Chatelet, is now lying indisposed at the village of Lavalliere. I will give out that I purpose paying him a visit; Seymour, whom thou sayest that I may trust, shall accompany me as my page, and after we have proceeded a few miles beyond the city, we will exchange clothes, that in case of any pursuit being made at an earlier hour than we calculate upon, Seymour may be made my scape-goat. The myrmidons of Landois will most likely not be able to recognize my features: the plumed cap and the silken doublet which he will wear, will convince them that in him they have secured the Earl of Richmond, while I, the poor page, shall not be considered a prize worth the trouble of guarding and taking care of."

"'Tis a trim plot, good my Lord," said Sir John Cheulet, "and I fear that you will most likely have

occasion to put the latter part of it in execution. Landois, as I hear, purposes to pay you an early visit this morning, doubtless for the purpose of assuring himself that the bird is safe in his cage. Should he not feel quite satisfied with the story of your visit to Sir Eustace Chatelet, he will infallibly send half a score of troopers after you. Yet be hopeful, my good Lord, be hopeful ; and as the peril of the *fair mind* was surmounted, so, I trust, will be that of the *false heart* also."

"As soon as you have passed the broad oak on the hill," said Urswick, "which marks the boundary of France and Britany, you will be safe from your pursuers, however near they may be to you. Landois dares not commit an outrage on the dominions of King Charles."

"I know the broad oak well," said Richmond, "for the time has been in which I was as careful to keep on this side of it, as I am now anxious to get beyond it. Mine, my friends, has been an eventful and dangerous career ; but I trust in the protection of Him whose captain I account myself, and who will yet, I hope, enable me to reward the exertions of my friends as they deserve."

Henry wrung the hands of the priest and the knight, and the tears started to the eyes of all as

they took leave of each other. A very short period sufficed to place Richmond and his page Seymour, who entered eagerly into the plot, in a condition to pursue their journey. The Earl's visit to his friend at Lavalliere, occasioned no surprise or comment, and unquestioned, and almost unobserved, he passed the city gates, and took the road to Angiers.

"Canst thou play an Earl's part well, my friend Seymour," said Richmond to his page as they rode along, "should occasion require thee?"

"Doubt not that, Sir," said the page; "I can sing like a troubadour, swear like a knight, swagger like a lord, and imitate any thing but the grace and urbanity of Henry Tudor."

"Thanks for thy compliment, my gentle friend," said the Earl, smiling; "but it is Henry Tudor whom thou must imitate, whether he be graceful and urbane or not, should the myrmidons of Landois overtake us ere we reach the frontier."

"I will do my best, my Lord," said Seymour. "Your Lordship has led so secluded a life that you are not very likely to be known to Landois' troopers. Some unlucky chance, however, may induce them to carry back the page as well as the master, and then methinks that our goodly plot will profit us little."

"Yet it is said," returned the Earl of Richmond, "that Landois and his emissaries wish to banish you to France;—so that if my disguise makes them mistake me for you, they will not, when they think that they see you on the high road to that country, without giving them the trouble to send you there, be much inclined to stop you in your journey."

"True, true!" said the page, "the scheme is worth trying. I will risk every drop of blood in my veins in the cause of Henry Tudor."

"Thou shalt risk nought," said Henry, "but a few hours' durance. The moment that I am safe on the French territory I will procure thy liberation, though it should be at the price of a prince's ransom: but here, methinks, is a convenient place for making that exchange of our garments on which the success of our enterprise mainly depends."

The exchange was speedily made, and the travellers were remounted, and once more moving with the utmost rapidity towards the frontier. Five hours had elapsed, and they perceived no symptoms of pursuit, but both they and their steeds began to feel the want of rest and refreshment, and therefore, after having penetrated a short way into the forest on the left hand of the road, for the purpose of procuring alike shelter from the overpowering

beams of the sun, and concealment from their enemies, they spread before them the slender repast with which they had provided themselves previous to quitting Vannes. They had now nearly performed half their journey, and began already to anticipate a favourable issue to their enterprise. The moments, however, were precious. They therefore hastily dispatched their meal, remounted their horses, and pressed forwards on their journey. Their steeds now began to appear somewhat jaded by their day's exertion, and toiled heavily and wearily along the road, which in the morning they had traversed with the fleetness of the forest deer. "Alas! Seymour," said Richmond, "as the day advances my hopes decline, my good horse is nearly exhausted; and hark! hearest thou nothing that thou wouldst not hear?"

"I hear nought, my Lord, but the murmur of the river, and the sound of our horses' hoofs as we traverse its banks."

"Alas, alas!" returned the Earl, "my ear has been quickened by long misfortunes and anxieties, and even now the distant trampling of our pursuers' hoofs is distinctly audible to me. Let us hasten for our lives."

They put spurs to their horses, and used every

effort to distance their enemies. The sounds which Richmond's car had first caught, were in a few minutes heard by Seymour; and as he looked back, a turning in the road showed half a dozen well-mounted horsemen, who by their uniform he knew to be Landois' troopers, rapidly descending the hill which he and Richmond had just left behind them.

"Now, my good Lord," said Seymour, "must we trust to our disguises; for the swift and powerful steeds on which these fellows are mounted, leave us no chance of being able to evade their pursuit. They near us, they near us!—Hark! what is't they say?"

"'Tis he, tis he!" exclaimed one of the troopers; "I know him by his waving plume, and by the red dragon embroidered on his doublet. Stand, in the name of the Duke of Britany, I command you!" he added, couching his spear, "or, by Heaven! ye are but dead men!"

"What mean you, rude companion," said Seymour, "by using such language and gestures to a prince of my rank and character, and by daring to assume the authority of the Duke of Britany's name, for committing an outrage on the person of his nearest and dearest friend?"

“ Henry Earl of Richmond,” said the leader of the troopers, addressing Seymour, “ I arrest thee as an ungrateful traitor to the good Duke Francis, who has so long cherished and protected thee. Unmindful of his protection and favours, thou art fleeing into the territory of his ancient enemy the King of France, in order to plot for the destruction of that treaty of peace and amity which has been so lately concluded between them.”

“ Duke Francis,” returned Seymour, “ says not so, nor has he given any authority to you to detain me.”

“ I have the authority,” answered the trooper, “ of his Grace’s Lord-Treasurer, the noble Peter Landois, for my proceedings.”

“ Peter Landois is a traitor and a slave !” said Seymour.

“ Tut, tut !” interrupted the soldier ; “ we came not hither to prate, my spruce springald :” and thus saying, he with the assistance of one of his followers, tied the page’s hands behind him. He then turned a curious and inquiring glance towards Richmond, who had remained a silent spectator of this scene.

“ I trust,” said Seymour, “ that if I am to be carried back a prisoner to Vannes, my page will be

allowed to attend me? One faithful servant will not be so formidable a retinue to a captive earl, that Peter Landois' need tremble at it."

There was an expression of acquiescence which for a moment softened the stern features of the trooper, and Seymour began to fear that the request, which he had made that it might be refused, would be complied with.

"My Lord of Richmond," said his captor, "I wish not to treat you with unnecessary harshness, as long as I feel assured that I have you safely in my custody. Sir Page, may I crave your name?"

"My name," said the Earl, "is Henry Seymour."

"Seymour, Seymour," echoed the other. "Then, by my faith! the prisoner is better without your company. Trust me, young Sir, that I do not mean to take upon me the charge of conducting you back to Vannes, that you may be able to plot once more against the interests of Duke Francis and my Lord Landois. Since you are so far on the road to France, be pleased to know that you are banished the territories of Britany, and that the sooner you cross the frontier the better it will be for you."

"Thou speakest truth more surely than thou art aware of," muttered Richmond. "Since it must

be," he added aloud, "that my noble Lord and I part, here I bid him a sad, but I hope not a long farewell."

"Farewell, farewell! my trusty servant," said Seymour.

"Not so fast, not so fast!" said the trooper. "This young gentleman is mounted upon a gallant steed, which by its trappings I perceive belongs to the Duke of Britany, and forms a part of that establishment which our ill-requited prince settled upon the Earl of Richmond during his residence at Vannes. Methinks 'tis somewhat strange that the better steed should be ridden by the page, while his lord and master bestrides a somewhat sorry nag in the comparison!"

This untoward discovery seemed likely to rend in pieces the thin web of Henry and Seymour's plot. The latter, however, answered with the utmost readiness and apparent unconcern.

"'Tis a fine animal! but he possessed so much metal that I, who am just recovered from a long illness, did not venture to bestride him. His fiery pace is better suited to Seymour."

"It may be so," said the trooper; "but methinks that a traitor and a banished man may find his way into France on foot; or, at least, may choose some

more fitting conveyance than a steed from the Duke's stables. Dismount, dismount, Sir Page !"

There was no remedy ; and as Richmond hastily balanced in his own mind the choice of evils, that from which he was delivered,—the return to Vannes, seemed to be far greater than that to which he was to be subjected,—the prosecution of the remainder of his journey on foot. He therefore obeyed the unceremonious command of the trooper, dismounted, and, amidst the jeers and laughter of his enemies, proceeded on his pedestrian expedition. As the sound of the horses' hoofs died away in the distance, Richmond began to reflect with feelings of no great satisfaction on his situation. He had still forty miles to travel before he could reach the French frontier, a journey which he had hoped to finish before the hour of eight in the evening ; but which, as it was now noon, and he was obliged to travel on foot, he could not expect to complete until after midnight. It appeared probable, too, that Seymour and his captors would arrive at Vannes in time to enable Landois to discover the mistake made by the latter, and to pursue and apprehend Richmond before he was safe on the French territory. With an anxious, but still with a bold heart, however, he plodded on his way. The burning heat of noon was succeeded

by the refreshing dews of evening, and the deep azure of the sky was spotted by dusky grey clouds, and yet no interruption was offered to his farther progress. Those grey clouds, too, assumed a yet darker tinge, and the shadows of night closed around him; and these again were illuminated by the silver radiance of the rising moon, and still Richmond had reason to nourish the hope that his second peril was encountered and escaped. The moon was riding high in the midnight heaven; and not the heart of the dove panted more eagerly once more to behold the ark, after its dreary travel over the desolate abyss of waters, than did that of Richmond to see the oak tree which marked the boundary between France and Britany, flinging its broad shadow in the moonlight, on the pathway of the now sinking and exhausted traveller. Still an unwonted serenity and calmness reigned in his bosom. The nightingale was trilling her song among the copses by his side, the river rippling in the moonbeams was murmuring at his feet, and the leaves of the forest were rustling in the night-wind over his head, and filling his mind with a variety of pleasing and soothing emotions. His heart, however, sunk within him as his prophetic ear again caught the distant trampling of hoofs. "The false heart," he exclaimed, "of Peter Lan-

dois will triumph after all—yet one effort, one more—for life and liberty, and the crown of England !”

Thus saying, he girded his loins and strained up the hill, on whose summit he knew stood that fateful tree which marked the boundary line, not only of France and Britany, but that of life and death to him. His pursuers drew near. A shout from a stentorian voice, which he instantly recognized to be that of Peter Landois, announced that their hunted prey was in view, and the brisk trot of the pursuers was increased to a full gallop. At that moment Henry beheld the majestic branches of the oak tree waving before him. He sprang with the velocity of the hunted deer towards it—the forefoot of a horse almost touched his heel, and just as the rider was reaching down his arm to grasp his prisoner, the latter darted past the tree, and sunk faint and almost lifeless on the soil of France.

“ Back, back, Master Landois,” said the Earl of Pembroke, who with the Bishop of Ely and a few attendants had been anxiously waiting the arrival of Henry Tudor, “ dare to commit the slightest violence on the territory of King Louis, and by Heaven you will light a flame which will speedily spread to the gates of your own palace in the city of Vannes ! The Earl of Richmond is now the guest of

the King of France, and I bear in my hand his Majesty's permission for him to take his residence at Angiers, and his command to all public functionaries, to treat him with the respect and deference due to his rank and worth."

"Are you there, Jasper Tudor?" said Landois, in a tone which denoted the bitterness of his exasperation and disappointment. "Fare ye well, fare ye well! ye know that I dare not, even for the purpose of apprehending a traitor to my gracious master, violate the French territory—yet your fate is but respited for a short season; the white boar of England will yet gore yon wittol adventurer with his tusks."

Thus saying he turned his horse's head, and motioning to his attendants to follow him, recrossed the frontier, and was soon hidden behind the brow of the hill which he had just ascended. Ely and Pembroke then raised the scarce-breathing form of Henry Tudor from the ground, and placing him carefully on a horse, at a slow and easy pace conducted him in safety to the town of Angiers.

Thus did Richmond escape his second peril.

We will not do more than briefly recapitulate the events which preceded our hero's encounter with his third peril, since they are matters of general history,

with which our readers must be sufficiently familiar. The French king received him honourably, and being desirous of raising disturbance to King Richard, he secretly encouraged the Earl in the levies which he made for the support of his enterprise upon England. The Earl of Oxford, whom Richard’s suspicions had thrown into confinement, having made his escape, here joined Henry, and inflamed his ardour for the attempt by the favourable account which he brought of the dispositions of the English nation, and their detestation of Richard’s crimes and usurpations. He also brought a piece of intelligence not less grateful to the mind of Henry, that the Princess Elizabeth continued constant in her attachment to him, and firmly resisted every solicitation to become the bride of the King.

At length the Earl of Richmond set sail from Harfleur in Normandy, with a small army of about two thousand men, and after a navigation of six days, he arrived at Milford Haven, in Wales, where he landed without opposition. He directed his course towards that part of the kingdom, in the hope that the Welsh, who regarded him as their countryman, would join his standard, and enable him to make head against the government. Nor were his hopes disappointed. Numbers joined him every day,

and he had some reason to think that Lord Stanley, who commanded a considerable force, and occupied a position between the armies of the Earl and the King, would throw off his allegiance to the latter, and join in the enterprise of the former. Such was the situation of affairs on the night when Richmond encamped on the field of Bosworth, near the city of Leicester, expecting that the enemy would give him battle on the morrow.

The morning dawned slowly and heavily; and with the first break of day arrived intelligence to Richmond of the near approach of the King, with an army of twenty-six thousand men, being nearly double the force which the Earl had to oppose to him. He also heard that Lord Stanley and Sir William Stanley were at the head of a body of eight thousand men, and were momentarily expected to join the army of the King, who, to secure the fidelity of Lord Stanley, had detained his son, Lord Strange, as an hostage; and had sworn that on the slightest indication of treachery on the part of the father, the son's head should be stricken off. In no ways disheartened by this intelligence, but relying on the justice of his cause, the zeal and valour of his troops, and the probability of Lord Stanley forming a junction with him instead of with King Richard, Henry

ordered his troops to be mustered ; and after riding through the ranks, cheering and encouraging them, he mounted a little hill, on which he could be seen by the whole army, and harangued them in a style of great eloquence and feeling.

“ If ever God,” he said, “ gave victory to men fighting in a just quarrel ; or if he ever aided such as made war for the benefit of their own native country ; or if he ever succoured such as adventured their lives for the relief of the innocent and the suppression of tyranny and crime ; no doubt, my fellows and friends ! but He, of his bountiful goodness, will this day send us triumphant victory over our arrogant adversaries. I doubt not that God will rather aid us,—ay, and fight for us,—than see us vanquished by such as neither regard him nor his laws, nor yet regard justice and honesty. Our cause is so just that no enterprise can be of more virtue, both by the laws divine and civil ; for what can be a more honest or godly quarrel than to fight against a homicide, and a murderer of his own blood and progeny, a destroyer of the nobility, and to his and our unhappy country and its people, a deadly evil, a firebrand, and an intolerable burden. Consider, too, who are his associates and followers ; such as by murder and falsehood have disinherited me and you, and wrongfully

usurp our lawful patrimony and lineal inheritance. He who calls himself king, keeps from me the crown of this most noble realm, contrary to all justice and equity. His mates and friends occupy your lands, cut down your woods, and destroy your manors, letting your wives and children range abroad for their living. Those persons, for their punishment, will, I doubt not, be delivered by God into our hands as a great gain and booty; or, being grieved by the stinging of their corrupt consciences, will flee from before us, and will not abide the battle. Besides this, I assure you that there are yonder in that great battle, men brought thither for fear and not for love; soldiers by force compelled, and not with good-will assembled; persons who desire the destruction rather than the triumph of their master and captain. And finally, there is a multitude, of which the greater part is our friends, and the smaller part our enemies. If this cause be not just, and this quarrel godly, let God, the giver of victory, judge and determine. We have, thanks be given to Christ! escaped the secret treasons in Britany, and avoided the subtle snares of our fraudulent enemies there, passed the troubled sea in safety, and are now come to the place which we have so much desired to reach,—for we have long sought the furious Boar, and

now we have found him. So that here," he added, "we stand as sheep, in a fold, between our enemies and our doubtful friends. Therefore, let all fear be set aside, and let us unite like brethren; for this day shall be the end of our labours, either by honourable death or by famous victory. Remember, that victory is not gained with the multitude of men, but by the courage of hearts, and the valiantness of minds. The smaller our number is, the greater will be our glory if we vanquish; and if we are overcome, yet no praise will be to be attributed to the victors, considering that three men will have fought against one. And of this one thing I assure you, that in so just and good a cause, and so notable a quarrel, ye shall find me this day rather a dead carion upon the cold ground, than a free prisoner on a carpet in a lady's chamber. And now advance forward, true men against traitors, pitiful persons against murderers, true inheritors against usurpers, the scourges of God against tyrants! Display my banner with a good courage; march forth like strong and robust champions; and begin the battle like hardy conquerors. The battle is at hand, and the victory approaches; and if we shamefully retreat or cowardly fly, we and all our followers shall be destroyed and dishonoured for ever. This is the day of gain, and this is the time of loss! Get this day

victory, and be conquerors ! Lose this day's battle, and be slaves ! Therefore, in the name of God and Saint George ! let every man courageously advance forth his standard !" *

At these words one loud and universal shout burst from the army, which had as yet stood listening in breathless attention ; a thousand banners were unfurled to the breeze, displaying the favourite colours of the house of Tudor, red and white, with a red dragon painted on them ; and spears were couched, and swords unsheathed, in readiness for the approaching conflict. The van of King Richard's army was just then seen on the brow of the opposite hill ; and their standards, bearing on them the King's favourite badge, a silver boar with tusks and bristles of gold, were seen floating in the air, in proud rivalry of the red and white banner of Richmond. Henry gazed anxiously on this ominous banner, and a sudden light flashed upon his mind. " Ha !" he said, " it is the third and last peril which Henry of Windsor told me that I should encounter, and which, if I escaped, I should wear the crown of England. Now then, to thy protection, God of Battles, I commend myself ! And now, my gallant friends, to the charge ! God and St. George for England !"

Both parties were now prepared for action. A

Hall.

wide morass intervened between the hostile armies ; and Richmond, first leading his troops forward, posted them judiciously with their right flank upon this barrier, placing them at the same time with their backs towards the sun, which shining with dazzling radiance full upon the front of the enemy, blinded their eyes with excess of light, while it gave a clear and distinct view of every object to the more shaded Lancastrians. No sooner had the Earl passed the morass, than the King gave directions for the attack. Amidst the blast of the trumpets and the clamour of the shouting soldiers, the King's archers rained down on the advancing enemy their fatal shower. The Earl's bowmen were not slow in returning it, and from their more favourable situation with respect to the light, with far more precision and effect. After this fearful prologue to the terrible drama which approached, the two armies joined, each ever and anon casting an anxious glance towards the north, where the Stanley's troops were seen advancing slowly, cautiously, and apparently irresolute and undetermined, with which of the contending parties they should form a junction.

In the meantime the Earl of Oxford, who commanded the van of Henry's army, perceived the amazing strength of King Richard's centre, and

fearing that he should be surrounded by the multitude of his enemies, he commanded that no man should go more than ten feet from the standard; which commandment being once known, they knit themselves closely together, and the division being thus concentrated in the form of a wedge, ceased the attack for a while, and awaited the moment of successful action. The enemy, suddenly abashed at this manœuvre, also ceased firing, and fell back a little, when Oxford, directing all his strength to one particular point, and cheering on his forces, rushed into the midst of the enemy, broke their lines, and drove them before them. At that moment shouts of "A Lancaster! a Lancaster!" were heard, and the Lord Stanley and his forces approaching the combatants joined the ranks of the Earl Richmond.

"Off with George Strange's head!" was heard shouted in the loud and angry tones of King Richard, and reverberated over the field. It reached the ear of the unhappy father; but the die was cast, and it only served to nerve the arms of himself and his followers more firmly, and to enflame their hearts with a more invincible determination to pull down the proud tyrant from the throne, which he had so long and so unworthily occupied.

That day King Richard performed prodigies of

valour. Whosoever he encountered fell beneath the apparently preternatural strength of his arm ; the enemy against whom he spurred his steed was quickly trampled beneath its hoofs ; the head on which his sword descended, rolled a gory ball in the dust ; the victim on whom his eye was fixed, was as certainly doomed as if he had met the fatal gaze of the basilisk. With an activity too, which was only rivalled by his prowess and strength, he seemed at the same moment of time to be in different and distant parts of the field, dealing death and destruction around him, so that he appeared to the terrified foe to be gifted alike with omnipotence and ubiquity. Wherever an advantage was to be improved, or a disaster to be repaired ; an attacking enemy to be repelled, or a retreating one to be pursued ; the fainting hearts of some of his troops to be inspirited, or the rash impetuosity of others to be restrained ; there was Richard to be seen brandishing his reeking weapon, with his golden crown upon his head, and the regal purple floating over his armour, attacking, defending, pursuing, withstanding, cheering, or forbidding ; and acting to the life the part which was indeed his own,—that of the presiding genius, the author and invoker of the terrific storm that raged around him. Although the insignia of royalty which he carried ostentatiously upon his person,

made him an obvious mark for the arrows and shots of the enemy, yet he seemed to bear a charmed life. The fatal missiles passed close by him on the right hand and on the left, but they touched him not; the sword that descended on his helmet, flew out of the hand of him who wielded it; and the spear which was pointed at his breast shivered into a thousand splinters, as he interposed his shield between him and its aim. The Duke of Norfolk fell at his right hand, and Sir Thomas Lovell at his left; and thrice did the horses which he rode fall to the ground, pierced by the fatal weapons to which their rider seemed invulnerable; but as often did the monarch spring with the speed of lightning on some other steed, which the officious attentions of his followers presented to him, or which rushed past him without its rider, of whom the chances of the day had deprived it.

The battle raged long and dubiously. The defection of Stanley and his followers seemed to be more than compensated by the King himself, before whose single arm numbers fled panic-struck. "The Boar's tusks," thought Richmond, "have fastened upon me. Oh! grant, great Heaven! that I may but escape this peril, and the glory and the honour shall be all thy own." At that moment a tremendous shout was set up by his retainers; a large body of

the enemy went over to his party, and a still larger body, under the command of the Earl of Northumberland, withdrew from the ranks of King Richard, and, retiring to a convenient distance, awaited in calm neutrality the issue of the combat.

The King's friends then saw that the victory was certainly wrested from them, and urged him to mount a swift horse and seek his safety in flight.

"Not one foot will I fly, Catesby," said Richard, "this day shall end all my battles or terminate my life. I will die King of England! Let me but meet this bastard Welshman, this Henry Tudor, hand to hand, and one thrust of my good sword shall terminate the conflict at a blow."

"Then, my liege," said Catesby, "behold, behold!" and pointed to a small company of men-at-arms at a short distance from them, in the midst of whom stood one, who by his curiously engraved armour and the red dragon emblazoned upon his shield, Richard immediately knew to be the Earl of Richmond.

"Treason, treason, treason!" shouted the King, and dashing out of the line, he rode with his spear in rest towards his enemy. The first who attempted to check his progress towards the Earl was Sir William Brandon, Richmond's standard-bearer, but one blow from the King's battle-axe stretched him dead

upon the earth. Hand to hand he then encountered Sir John Cheyney, a man of gigantic stature and strength, and for a moment the issue of their meeting seemed doubtful, but the knight soon was borne from his saddle. "St. George, St. George for England!" shouted the King, "down with the Dragon!" and as he rushed on towards Richmond, he seemed to be the personification of that far-famed champion whom he named, and to be about to realize the legendary victory which had been ascribed to him. Richmond, however, sat firm in his saddle, prepared to enter into personal and mortal conflict with his grand enemy. But this combat was prevented; for the King, whose impetuosity had hurried him far out of the ranks of his own retainers, found himself alone and unassisted in the midst of his enemies. Brandishing his battle-axe, however, in his hand, he for a long time maintained this unequal warfare, now cleaving to the earth an enemy, now warding off a blow, until at length, hacked with a hundred weapons, he fell from his horse and sank blood-drenched and lifeless to the ground.

"Victory, victory! the King is slain!" "The devouring boar is conquered!" "God and St. George for England!" Such were the acclamations with which the whole field of battle rang, to which Lord Stanley added, as he rode up to the spot where Rich-

mond stood receiving the congratulations of his friends, "God save King Henry!" This last shout was immediately caught by the assembled multitude, and re-echoed by every voice. Stanley then stooping down, plucked the crown from the dead brows of Richard, placed it on those of Henry; and amidst the shouts of the soldiers, the martial sounds of victory from the trumpets and clarions, and cries of "Quarter, quarter!" from the baffled foes, who now submitted themselves to his mercy, the new King paraded the field, and received the unanimous fealty and homage of his subjects.

Thus were the Three Perils of Richmond encountered and escaped, the crown of England firmly placed upon his head, and the prophecy of King Henry the Sixth fulfilled. A few days afterwards introduced him to his long admired, but till then unseen bride. Henry and Elizabeth were united in the holy bands of matrimony, and the fatal wars of York and Lancaster terminated for ever.

END OF VOLUME II.

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